Featuring The Exclusive **HITCH** *Cookbook!*

HITCH

#14 • WINTER 1996/1997 • $3.50

World's Biggest Fire Hazard

Disaster Movies of the '70s

The Importance of Being Fonzie

Race to Male Pattern Baldness

Sexual Harassment in *Beetle Bailey*

Infant Contraption of Doom Seminar

Fun with Pirates

GILLIGAN'S ISLAND

The Seven Deadly Sins

HITCH

HOOKED ON EBONICS

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Star Trek: First Contact

Rejected Dalmatian Names from *101 Dalmatians*
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Mange
Lil' Cujo
Rabie
Wormy
Humper
Zoltan

HITCH is published on a relatively quarterly basis by **HITCH** Publishing Empire, P.O. Box 23621, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-2621. E-mail: RLott@aol.com. **HITCH** welcomes anything for review, plus unsolicited manuscripts, photographs and/or artwork, but assumes no responsibility for them and won't return 'em without an SASE. **HITCH** is a not-for-profit work, with all revenues going toward printing, production, postage, distribution and supply costs.

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HITCH

#14 • WINTER 1996/97

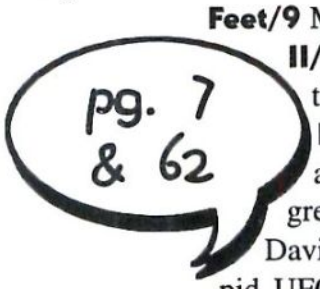
"The truth is, I practice absurdity quite religiously."
—Alfred Hitchcock

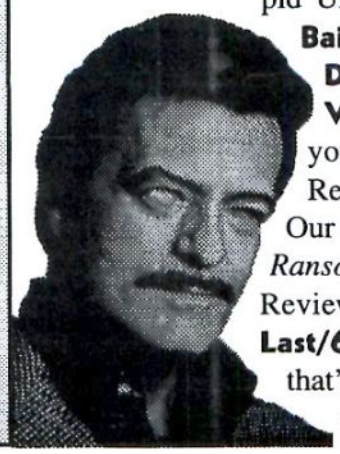
MAIN FEATURES

I'm Just Bill, Yes, I'm Only Bill, and I Stack Books Up as High as a Hill/16 Two intrepid reports risk life and limb to bring you the story of a literary hermit. By Rod Lott and Joe Rogers. **The Seven Deadly Sins of Gilligan's Island/21** The passengers of the Minnow may have only taken a three-hour tour, but they'll be spending an eternity in hell. By Rod Lott. **In Space, No One Can Hear You Yawn/24** Space museums are like black holes, in more ways than one. A very short he-man adventure by Rod Lott. **Hair Prix/25** Many games are played in domes. This is the only one *about* domes. Rod Lott and Ken Davis square off, and the stakes are high. **The HITCH Cookbook & Kitchen Companion/27** Our exclusive, 12-page, pull-out section brimming with fattening recipes and other culinary matters. Brought to a boil by Rod Lott, with help from Joe Rogers. **Destructorama!: Disaster Films of the '70s/39** Years before *Jurassic Park*, these films ruled the roost. A retrospective by Mike Accomando. **The Pirate Pages/42** Fun 'n' games for the seafarin' rascal in you. Eyepatch *is* included. By Rod Lott and Joe Rogers. **I Choose Fonzie/44** Advice on how to run your life (although women should probably look to Pinky Tuscadaro instead). By Ken Davis. **Tenda Loving Care/45** Now is the time to baby your baby...with a contraption that costs nearly a thousand big ones? Almost-new papa Ken Davis investigates.

EVERYTHING ELSE

Heapin' Mailbag/3 Warning: A Glamour Shot was e-mailed to us this month. **The FBI's Fugitive of the Month/7** Stare into the cold face of evil incarnate. **The Robert Goulet Death Watch/7** See previous entry. **Thou Art Garth?/7** How to effectively insult an Aaron Spelling ingenue. By Steve Hunt. **Wichita Confidential/7** News on the poor white trash front. By Ken Davis. **STATS/8** You see, there are these men, and they take these sharp things, and they cut...oh, never mind. You wouldn't believe it. By Rod Lott. **Hootie and One Blowfish Select M&Ms/8** The final chapter in this riveting saga. **The Agony and the XXXtascy/9** Chuck Heston talks about his purple rifle. By Rod Lott. **Tom Neesnan's Belated Movie Reviews/9** *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*? Better late than never. By Tom Neesnan. **Fast Food Horrors! At 37,000 Feet/9** Make mine decaf. On second thought... **My Gargage Sale Diary II/10** Terrors offset only by the fact that this sale was more lucrative than the last. By Rod Lott. **SAID/10** The idiotic, quoted. **Foolproof Problem-Solving Flowchart/10** Appropriated and adapted from a well-circulated Xerox. **Counting Carts!/11** The great new game that's sweeping the nation...or at least at Ken Davis' house. **HITCH Vox Populi/12** Your stupid answers to stupid UFO questions. **This Month in Sexual Harassment in Beetle Bailey/14** Tailhook, King Features' style. By Rod Lott. **Disc Dish/47** Our new format for *reviewing overpriced CDs*. **Videos/50** The most unoriginal title of all our regular features, yet you just can't get enough. This time, with a perverted new contest. Reviews by Rod Lott. **Flicks/60** Our honest opinion on *Swingers*, *Ransom* and *The English Patient*. Reviews by Rod Lott. **Dead Last/62** Named as such because that's what it is. Consider it your final chaser for the issue.





COVER

The Skipper and Gilligan, in cohorts with Satan, played by himself, David Hasselhoff.

Please send all kindhearted words, acrimonious missives and items for review to Heapin' Mailbag, c/o **HITCH**, *P.O. Box 23621, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-2621. Or e-mail us at RLott@aol.com. All mail is subject to extreme ridicule.*

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear **HITCH**,

I'm all locked up in the chain gang. My roommate worships the devil and has satanic tattoos. He does rituals with blood and sperm. He stabbed six inmates and one guard and escaped seven times. He's done 11 on 14 for 150 hot cars. He started a fight with me for no reason.

His buddy Skip was a real Hell's Angel. He shot a cop 12 times in the groin. He got 25 years, did nine, got out and shot two more people. Now he's back in. The cop still shits in a bag.

I have no money. Please accept this zine in trade for your zine. There is no lunch here on weekends and "holidays." Chicken pattie is ground-up feet and bones and crap deep-fried to hell, greasy and inedible. Literally tastes like shoe leather.

Rob Reynolds
Prisoner #342777
Sparta, GA

And what did you *do to get in, Robbie? Funny how you conveniently neglected to mention that. And funny how I am sending nothing to you.*

HASSELHOFFED

Hi Rod,

I just read the review of your zine in *Factsheet 5* and need to get a copy of **HITCH** 12.

As you may not know, Mr. Hasselhoff has a major following of pre-puberty girls in Germany, having brainwashed them into buying his dreadful shitty CDs.

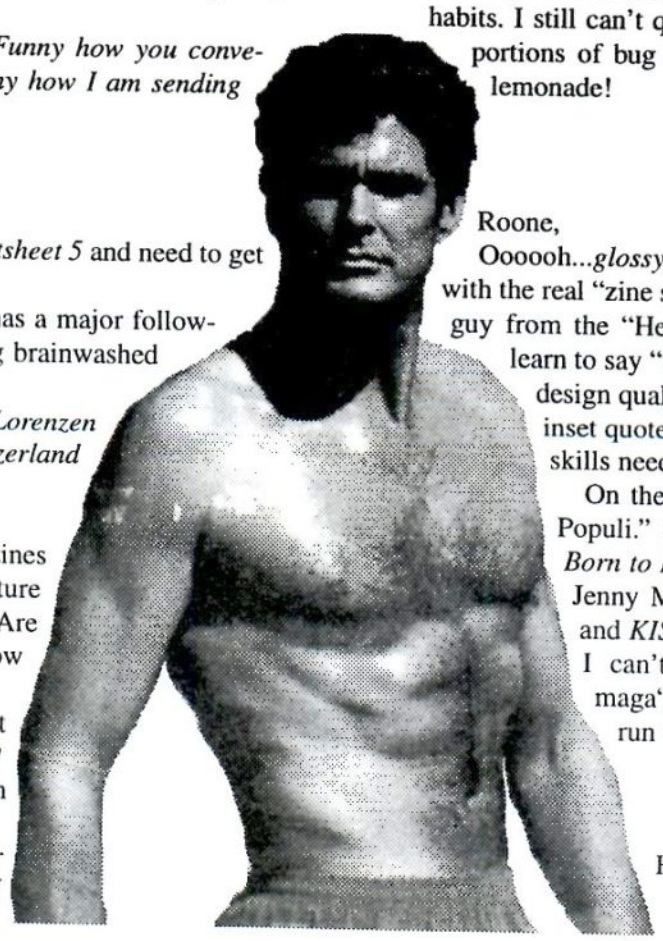
Sonke Lorenzen
Zurich, Switzerland

Dear Rod,

Hello there! Do you have anymore fanzines published lately? Do you plan to print any future zines with *Baywatch* stories anytime soon? Are you excited about the companion show *Baywatch Nights*?

Do a lot of people "Hassel" you about your love of *Baywatch* the way they do me? I'd just tell them to "Hassel 'off!" Until high tide,

Louis Fowler
Oklahoma City, OK



THE USUAL

Rod:

This is Geoff, assistant to Marty Sokol, producer of *Reel Wild Cinema*. Marty *always* likes a good write-up on his show ("*Reel Wild Cinema*: The Reel Story!," **HITCH** 13). Thanks a lot, man; we appreciate it!

Geoff
Hollywood, CA

Rod–

Thanks for sending the back issues of **HITCH**! Great stuff, as usual. **HITCH** really is one of my favorite reads, and I'm not a big fan of mags that attempt to be humorous (usually, they are anything but). I'm also glad you cover movies and TV.

When is your new issue coming out? It's one of the few I really look forward to nowadays. Lately, most of the zines I've been sent have mistaken attitude for talent. Your mag scores big points on the thrill chart by being funny *and* informative. I always look forward to the next issue.

Mike Accomando
Fairview, NJ

Rod:

I got the **HITCH**s and they are a hoot. A friend and I talked about the anal massage options ("STATS: Your Rectum, Your Friend," **HITCH** 10) all the way to Hershey, Pa. and back.

Dan Aloi
Horseheads, NY

To Whom It May Concern:

I am interested in obtaining a copy of the issue of **HITCH** featuring a piece on Crispin Glover. Please send info.

John Cafiero
New York, NY

This is simple: You buy one.

Rod,

I must admit that the article on Fruitopia ("Government-Approved Insect Juice," **HITCH** 11) has totally changed my beverage consumption habits. I still can't quite get over the fact I've been ingesting large portions of bug blood. Dammit, I love that raspberry psychic lemonade!

Michelle' Langston
Oklahoma City, OK

Roone,

Oooooh...*glossy!* You're a big, fat sellout, man. You're not down with the real "zine scene" at all. Whatever. Tell that nutzy postcard guy from the "Heapin' Mailbag" (**HITCH** 13) to eat shit and learn to say "maga" before "zine" and shut the fuck up. Your design quality is up, up, up and away. Love the funky font inset quotes with art accompaniment, but your Photoshop skills need some airbrushing.

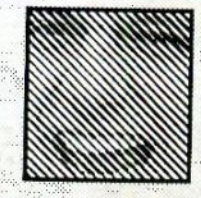
On the editorial front, keep it up, but lose the "Vox Populi." Special highlights of the latest issue include: *Born to Be Wild* cover in "Heapin' Mailbag," picture of Jenny McCarthy, Shannon Miller on a Wheaties box and *KISS: The Movie*. What I'm getting at here is that I can't wait until you're Mayor McCheese of a maga"zine" publishing empire so I can come up and run that trailer into a ditch.

Taylor Holland
Austin, TX

Hey, Rod,

Just finished **HITCH** 13, another fine issue,

A LETTER FROM THAT ROD GUY



Last issue's "Heapin' Mailbag" contained a message from one Dianne Dorsey, who began her letter with the always welcome "You're cute!" For reasons best unbeknownst to me, she included a Glamour Shot of herself. I had meant to run it alongside her letter, but my brain had succeeded in erasing the ghastly memory by presstime.

I found it while cleaning my hard drive, however, so here it is. (And thanks for the compliment, Dianne, but it is one I cannot return. Even at gunpoint.)

✪ ✪ ✪

We've been meaning to tell you about this for the past two issues, but we keep forgetting: **HITCH** was one of but a few zines featured in a syndicated article on zines which appeared in many Knight-Ridder newspapers nationwide. As a result, the counter for **HITCH** Online shot up to more than 10,000 hits in a single week.

"**HITCH**...has a top-notch web design and could be mistaken for a Time Warner publication. But look below the surface and you quickly realize this is no *Life* magazine. A brief interview with Robert Goulet includes the question: "Did your prostate problems affect your career?" A first-person article titled "Last Train to Jerksville" describes an encounter with former Monkee Micky Dolenz. A blurb called "The STATS on Lustful Livestock" deserves an NC-17 rating."

Our thanks to reader Darrell Patterson for sending us a copy, as printed in the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*.

✪ ✪ ✪

Meanwhile, as our online efforts go recognized nationwide, one senior editor is peeved at the lack of interest in *his* special project. While some of you have visited Ken Davis' page on his interview with Yashema, the dog psychic (the subject of last issue's and my name is in the letters column to boot. I hope the Osbon Foundation doesn't accuse me of lacking journalistic objectivity. Oh, well. And an interesting postcard you got from Alphonse Wolfgang (I'd recognize the handwriting anywhere).

The *Twister* Museum piece ("Twister Blister") was a whirl, the "Campus Craziness" was weird (what'd she ever do to you to deserve that rough treatment?), the dog reading ("Dog Gone Psychic") was weird, and, as usual, the video reviews rocked. I like them especially 'cause I have Something Weird Video's catalog and can never decide where to get started.

Chip Rowe
Chicago, IL

What'd that girl ever do to me? She never asked me for a date, for starters.

Rod,

Not sure why you think **HITCH** 13 is better than those that came before; I'd be hard-pressed to find a single issue not to like. Still, I will admit that Ryun's interview with "Dice" ("No Dice") and Ken's "Dog-Gone Psychic" interview are as good as it gets. By the way, do you send copies of **HITCH** to those who get interviewed? If so, Ryun better not let his guard down. "Dice" strikes me as the kind of guy who would...eh...strike you.

Now about those toilet seat wipes ("PRBS"): Perhaps you could poll folks as to how they first learned of the "need" to protect themselves from the seats in public restrooms. Is this really primarily a "girl thing?" I learned of it when I had the opportunity to spend some time in a 10-man county jail cell. Believe me, there was nothing girlish about these guys. Just like in that Arlo Guthrie tale, the damned toilet didn't have a seat. It was nothin' but cold, wet porcelain to press your cheeks against. And there weren't any walls around the friggin' thing, either.

It was here that I observed and learned the ritual of placing a toilet-paper shield between one's ass and the pot. It protected from the cold, the wet and the vermin that undoubtedly lived in the secretions of my hairy bunkmates. It's a lesson I've had a hard time shaking, but women – it seems – have it even worse. In one of my past lives, I ran a small cleaning company. I understood why there might be urine on the seats in a men's room (guys with "shy bladders" avoid the open urinals, but neglect to lift to seats), but I could never understand why I'd frequently find urine (and worse!) on the seats in the women's rooms. Finally, someone explained to me that *many* women squat over the seat...even a paper shield can't comfort them! And sadly, it appears that aiming them things ain't no picnic.

By the way, couldn't resist sticking your **HITCH** *Found Footage* collection in the VCR as soon as it arrived. Fun stuff! I particularly "enjoyed" the penile wart laser treatment footage. Ouch!

Paul Kazee
New York City, NY

Rod, O My Dear Rod,

Liked **HITCH** 13 – especially the cover. I prefer the B&W slippery cover to the old color cardstock. It looks great!

As for the stuff inside – that is, the material printed on the pages – well, Tinker clearly stole the show. I didn't realize canines were prone to such sensitive musings. Funny telemarketing piece, too – and you ask why we don't have a phone! (So maybe the unpaid bill had a bit to do with it, but...)

Greg Brady (viz. Barry "I'll always be known as Greg Brady, so I might as well get money for it" Williams) spoke here last month, too ("Here's the Story of a Bloated Ego"), but we decided against putting ourselves through that surely torturous event. Things are disturbing enough up here in the heavenly state. I mean, a senator named Orrin "coin-your-own-rhyme-to-my-appellation" Hatch? C'mon!

Joe Rogers
Ogden, UT

Rod,

Issue 13 of **HITCH** was up to your usual exemplary standards. Keep up the great work!

Erik Nelson
Houston, TX

Dear Rod:

I kept wondering when **HITCH** 13 would arrive, and it's certainly better late than never! As usual, the issue was as great as the last one. Keep on chooglin and keep up the good work with **HITCH**!

Fred Hamilton
N. Myrtle Beach, SC

RLott:

Love **HITCH** mag.

Will Richards
Address Unknown

Will: Me thank you.

Rod,

Was that article about Micky Dolenz and Davy Jones ("Last Train to Jerksville," **HITCH** 9) true?

Does "Tork" rhyme with "dork?"

WWW.SUCKUP.COM

Rod,

My compliments on your pop culture page. It really gave me a good laugh, especially the "Fast Food Horrors" (I have worked in the food industry) and the "Your Rectum, Your Friend" (my cousin is a proctologist).

Andrew Relkin
Address Unknown

Andrew: Do not shake your cousin's hand.

To: twilken

I really like your page, so I have decided to give you an award! I don't know how important that is to you, but here is the background on it (and I really am trying to keep this from being a form letter, since I am only sending it to three people): Okay...I run a page called the New Ground Remix. It isn't super popular, it isn't even that good, but I'm proud of my games, "Assassin" and "Club a Seal." That's all that matters.

Today, I added an awards section with my three favorite web pages being the winners. You guys were one of them, because I love reading the stuff on your page. If you want to see the awards page, it is: *http://www.users.fast.net/~wadef/uh.html.*

Okay, that's about it. Great page!

Tom Fulp
tfulp@fast.net

Hello,

I came across your page on the web. Please send me the August 1995 issue of **HITCH**.

Jared Yaffe
Sudbury, MA

Hey!

I can't find any information on the scary mind of Crispin Glover. I really want to get in contact with him, but your info might suit just as well! Please help me!

Chrystie Chambers
Address Unknown

BRING ME THE HEAD OF DON HENLEY

Rod,

Thanks for the recent inclusion of *Led Balloons* in **HITCH** 12. Too bad I hadn't sent you this comic pertaining to Don Henley, to go along with your "The Eagles Must Die" article. But just so ya know, we're on the same page as far as that goes.

"The same page" seems to be one of those expressions that's either new or in vogue; I don't know.

Dave Kocher
Erie, PA

Dear Rod –

I read about **HITCH** in the new *Factsheet 5* and it sounds great – especially the Eagles article. Please send it.

Roger Leatherwood
Oakland, CA

WHERE ART THOU?

To Rod Lott

At the risk of bringing you down, I should point out that **HITCH** is not available at any of Madison's downtown bookstores and yet has found its way to the omnipresent Barnes & Noble recently built out in the sticks. Then again, maybe you don't give a damn.

Phil
Madison, WI

Rod:

Wow! The new, glossy **HITCH** 13 was a stunner. I'd better get my renewal check in before the price skyrockets. Thus far, no evidence of your zine on the shelf at the Piggly Wiggly here in town, but I presume it's only a matter of time. Something of this quality won't be a secret long.

It also amazes me that there are so many B-movies out there that I haven't seen. I thought I had lived through the "Golden Age" of B-movies. Go figure.

Just as the foreclosers are coming in, you will find my check in the mail for the upcoming year of **HITCH**. Treat my buddy Karl Walters to a year as well. It's hard enough for him being a loser without being deprived of **HITCH**. It's all he has to live for. While everyone around him is getting engaged and/or married, Karl remains dateless in Stanley, Wis. The only thing that keeps him from moving to a remote area in Montana is his quasi-regular **HITCH**. Keep America safe.

Darrell Patterson
Algoma, WI

SAY WHAT?

Dear Mr. Lott,

I was recently watching a rerun of *Doogie Howser, M.D.* – the episode that featured Doogie's inimitable sidekick Vinnie delivering his French teacher's baby while trapped in an elevator.

That also brought to mind recent reruns of *Saved by the Bell* where that lovable scoundrel Zach delivers Mrs. Belding's baby while trapped in a school elevator. Which also brought to mind an old episode of *Welcome Back, Kotter*, where famous, soon-to-be-Scientologist John Travolta delivered a baby while – you guessed it – trapped in an elevator.

What is the American sitcoms' obsession with delivering babies while trapped in elevators? The lesson seems to be the same for all three shows: namely, delivering a baby while you're about 16 or 17 seems to bestow a wealth of responsibility.

How many other shows have followed this cover story), no one's bothered to listen to the nifty interview excerpts.

"The page has gotten a few hits, but one damn download of the sound files I spent a whole fucking Saturday putting together," Ken vented. "You might want to mention in the next **HITCH** that I'm mad no one has bothered to listen to the sound files."

Readers, why not give 'em a listen? The one about anal-sac problems is particularly choice. Point your browser to *www2.southwind.net/~kend* and bake someone happy.

✪ ✪ ✪

I'm getting tired of having to relay things like this, but...well, I'll just let a letter from observant reader Dwain Henry fill you in:

"I was just looking through the latest issue of *Spy* (Oct. 1996) and noticed they ran the same copy of 'Spanking the Mormon' that you ran in **HITCH** several issues back (**HITCH** 11, Feb./March 1996). Now I realize that this info came from a Mormon pamphlet, but I just thought it was more than a coincidence that they happened to run it so soon after you had. Am I getting paranoid?"

No, Dwain, you ain't, as illiterate kids in these parts are apt to say. You weren't the only one to notice it. In fact, **HITCH** Wichita Bureau Chief Ken Davis, upon receiving the issue in question, e-mailed this missive: "I immediately noticed the Mormon masturbation coincidence. I, for one, am steamed. I won't stand for it, I tell you, I won't!"

Crossword master and Austinite Taylor Holland, meanwhile, is out for blood.

"It's reasonable to assume at this point that *Spy* has a gaggle of smart-assed college interns sitting in a room somewhere thumbing through fanzines and coming up with bright ideas," he wrote. "I think you should sue them. It would be great press for **HITCH**. Big lawsuit. I'll be your lawyer. It'll be kind of like Andy Kaufman's wrestling career. We'll taunt them into a showdown. It will be funny and we'll make money."

✪ ✪ ✪

Until the spring, kids...

crowd-pleasing formula? You all seemed like the most sensible people to ask.

By the way, love the magazine. Have there been any further issues since No. 12?

Apur Patel
Address Unknown

Wow! Where can I find me an elevator?

Hi there!

As a Hitch myself, I'm intrigued! Why do you call it **HITCH**? Ta!

Luke Hitch
Address Unknown

Our publication is named after a silly man who says stupid things like "Ta!"

Mr. Lott:

Re: "Plasma Donation: Lazy Man's Dream or Needle-Ridden Nightmare?" (**HITCH** 9): My veins are too little for plasma donation. They throw me out of the plasma center every time.

But I've got this idea for a story. If you steal this idea, I'll kill you: Would it be possible for some head honcho at a plasma center to steal needles and sell them to heroin addicts? I'm a good girl. I don't know if they are the same kind of needles.

Patti Lamberti
Address Unknown

R. Lott:

Got an idea, Mr. Neesnan: There's all these disgusting kids running around mutilating their bodies by poking holes through their skin and embedding artwork there also. Could you please address this aberration in your next issue?

Farris
Oklahoma City, OK

Tom Neesnan replies: "No."

Dear Mr. Lott,

Let me introduce myself, my name is Reta Locklear, I am associated with Rose Hill Burial Park, one of the oldest and most prestigious parks in Oklahoma.

The reason that I am writing is to offer my services to you. Many families plan for their financial future but fail to include planning for one of the most important decisions that face all of us, thus leaving it for our loved ones to make. We at Rose Hill offer a program called "Circle of Protection" which will assist you in providing for yourself and your loved ones. This service is provided so that you can remove much of the stress and unnecessary costs in memorialization. As you plan for the future make sure that your financial planning covers all the necessary arrangements.

I will be contacting you in the near future in regards to setting a time to share with you how you can protect yourself and your loved ones from costly and hastily made decisions.

Reta Locklear
Rose Hill Burial Park
Oklahoma City, OK

Dear Ms. Locklear, I will be hanging up on you in the near future.

GOD BLESS FACTSHEET 5

Hi there Rod/**HITCH**/whatever,

I became addicted to your zine through *Factsheet 5* (bet you've never heard that one before, now, have you?), and luckily, my fav-o-rite store (Criminal Records in Atlanta) always carried it. However, I never saw **HITCH** 12 there, so here's four dollars.

I hope this makes it through the mail 'cause the last time someone tried to send me my comb in the mail, it was confiscated (I mean, the last time one of those transactions happened; my comb usually doesn't go through the mail; long story).

Anyway, here's the cash, so get on it, boy!

Scott Watkins
Atlanta, GA

Rod M. Lott,

Hello. Wow, I read your review in *Factsheet 5* and your zine sounds really radical indeed!

I do not normally pay money for zines, but it seems like **HITCH** 12 is worth some dough.

So here's some moolah.

James Reling
Boulder, CO

Rod,

Factsheet 5 said that if I didn't pick up a copy of **HITCH**, then I'm crazy. So please rush me a copy of the latest issue.

HITCH really does sound like an excellent zine and I look forward to reading it.

Calvin Stacy Powers
Cary, NC

Dear Rod:

Greetings. I read about your zine, **HITCH**, in the latest issue of *Factsheet 5*, and based on the rave review, I figured I just had to check it out.

Greg Clow
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Rod–

Hey, saw **HITCH** 12 in *Factsheet 5*. Please send a copy. I read **HITCH** 11 (I think it was 11 – it had "phone sex" on the cover) and I enjoyed it quite a bit and 12 sounds great! Yes, I am over 18, born 10/27/73. Swear to Jeeeeezus.

Joe Gallo
San Francisco, CA

ETC. ETC. ETC.

Howdy –

Been meaning to check out **HITCH** for a while. Here's some money.

Al Hoff
Pittsburgh, PA

Dear Rod,

I'd like to receive an issue of the **HITCH** and information on subscribing. Thanks.

Roger Howell
New York, NY

Dear Rod Lott,

Hi! I read with great interest about your **HITCH** zine in *Publish* magazine. Enclosed is $3.50 to obtain a sample copy.

D.A. Diaz
Tracy, CA

Hi,

Please ignore the reverse side of this stupid card (see left) and rush me a copy of **HITCH**, as advertised in *McJob*. Thanks!

David Coble
Pensacola, FL

Hey,

I read of your zine in *McJob*. Please send the "Not-at-All-Serious Travel" Issue (**HITCH** 10).

Mike Meador
Indianapolis, IN

HITCH:

Four bucks enclosed for a copy of **HITCH** (or, failing that, anything that amuses you).

Barry Polley
San Francisco, CA

Dear Rod:

Here's five bucks which is for the latest issue of **HITCH**, plus another buck so that you would...if you will...wrap it carefully to protect it from the ravages of the Florida disgruntled postal worker, which, I am sorry to say, is not an endangered species; indeed, they seem to thrive hereabouts.

Thanks.

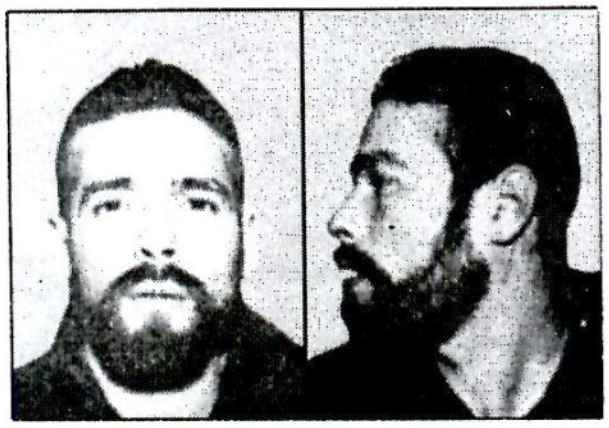
Andy Nukes
Clearwater, FL

WIN $$$!

The FBI's Fugitive of the Month

WANTED

For Interstate Flight / Murder



Damian Monserrat

ALIAS: Damian Valentin,
Damien Monserrat Valentin, Damian
DOB: 01 / 14 / 62
BIRTHPLACE: San Juan, Puerto Rico
HEIGHT / WEIGHT: 5'7", 140 lbs.
BUILD: slender
HAIR: brown
EYES: brown
COMPLEXION: ruddy
RACE: white
SOCIAL SECURITY: 581-39-8962
IDENTIFYING SCARS: none

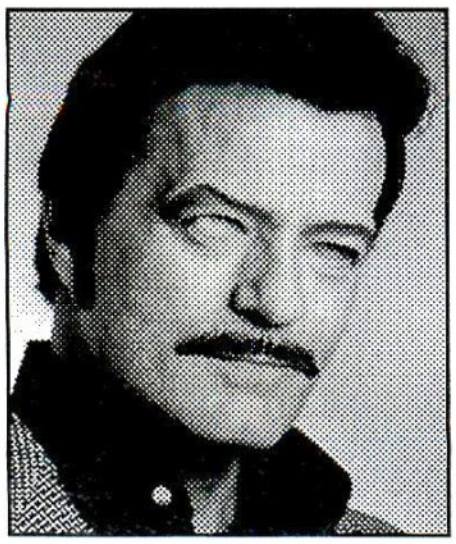
Consider this: Monsieur Monserrat, who allegedly is a drug-user, is wanted for killing a three-month-old baby.

Consider this: Monsieur Monserrat speaks very little English and is "known to consume extremely large quantities of alcohol."

Lastly, consider this: *His name is Damian.*

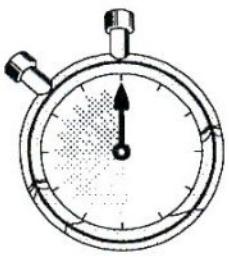
Get it? He's the devil! Hasn't anyone in the FBI seen *The Omen*? I think they'd better rethink that "no identifying scars" line and replace it with "666 on scalp."

If you've seen him, call FBI HQ at (202) 324-3000.



The Robert Goulet

DEATH WATCH



Approximately 25 years and 3 months remaining

Thou Art Garth?

Accompanied by *tres* peachy dames, I made a southerly trip to Planet Hollywood in Dallas. Lots of wild and wacky stuff

Julie Thaiklough-Carlson

occured that night, but the most memorable was this: We saw Jennie Garth of *Beverly Hills 90210* "fame."

The in-attendance Jennie was signing autographs for purported fans that evening. One of the females I was with was quite happy to see her, for some reason.

But I walked up to her and said, "Jennie McGarthy! You are *excellent* on *Singled Out*!" She kinda fake-giggled and said, "Yeah."

She signed my free T-shirt anyway with one of those permanent marker things.

—Steve Hunt

Wichita Confidential

Kansas has issued all welfare and AFDC recipients new "Vision" cards that allow white trash to get their benefits from ATMs and to pay for groceries like they would a credit card.

I recently was waiting in line to pay for my bottle of Extra Strength Drain-O. The guy in front of me emptied his cart of foodstuff onto the counter. After the clerk totaled his order, he whipped out his Vision card. He put in his PIN number and it was declined. He tried two more times and was still declined. The manager was called over to investigate. The customer was irate. "I bought $150 worth of stuff yesterday and it worked fine," he explained.

The manager said, "Sir, you realize of course that you are only allowed to spend up to the amount of monthly benefits in your account. It's not a credit card."

"Damn," said the guy. "Guess I'll just get the cat food then."

America! *—Ken Davis*

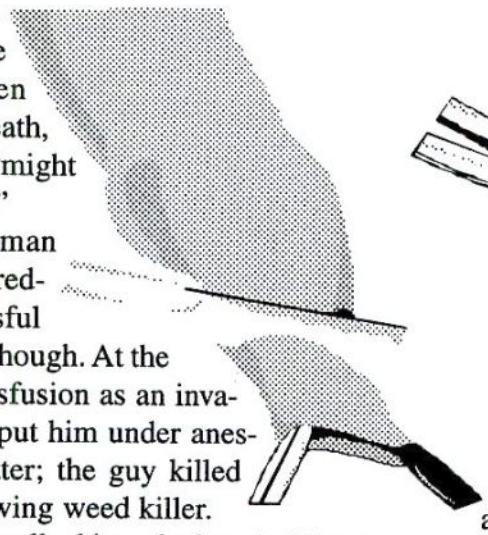
STATS

He Slices, He Dices...

Orchiectomy. The very word conjures up images of orchids, doesn't it? But its true meaning doesn't smell nearly as sweet. To put it bluntly, orchiectomy is the act of cutting off one's own male genitalia.

Although the act is rare, modern medicine has done its job of cataloguing each instance. Some of the more stranger case histories include:

• A 24-year-old single man tried to circumcise himself using a pair of scissors. Nearly two hours after doing so, he decided it might be a good thing to visit his local emergency room. There, he told doctors that he'd been depressed since his father's death, and thought that playing rabbi "might lift (me) out of (my) depression."



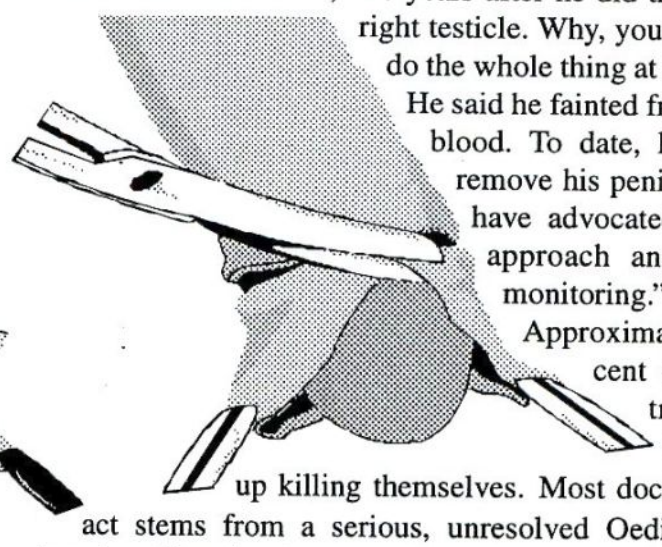
• A 37-year-old single man attempted self-castration with a red-hot poker. He proved successful only in excising his left testicle, though. At the hospital, he refused a blood transfusion as an invasion of his privacy, so surgeons put him under anesthetic to do their work. No matter; the guy killed himself not long after by swallowing weed killer.

• A 36-year-old married man walked into the hospital "wearing a blood-soaked nappy." Turns out – surprise! – he'd been slicing up his scrotum.

• A 38-year-old transsexual castrated himself using a razor blade, telling doctors he had "opened the scrotum, dissected the left testis and removed it from its root. Severe bleeding prevented him from repeating the procedure on the opposite side." Apparently, he had considered his penis to be "abnormal" since he was all of 12 years.

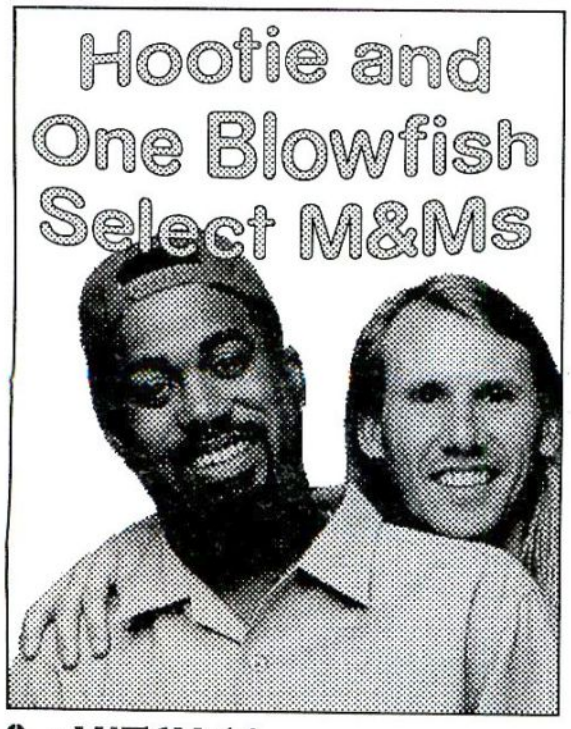
The next day, he went home and took off the other testicle. Three months later, he whacked the penis clean off. Occurring in 1993, this was the first report of self-castration and subsequent penile amputation.

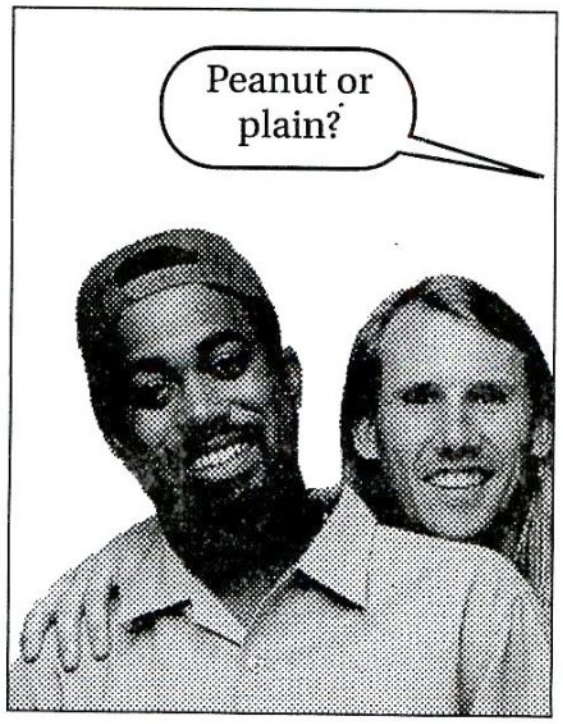
• A 33-year-old man razored off his left testicle and flushed it down the toilet. This, two years after he did the same to his right testicle. Why, you ask, didn't he do the whole thing at once? Simple: He said he fainted from the loss of blood. To date, he has yet to remove his penis. His doctors have advocated "a cautious approach and scrupulous monitoring."

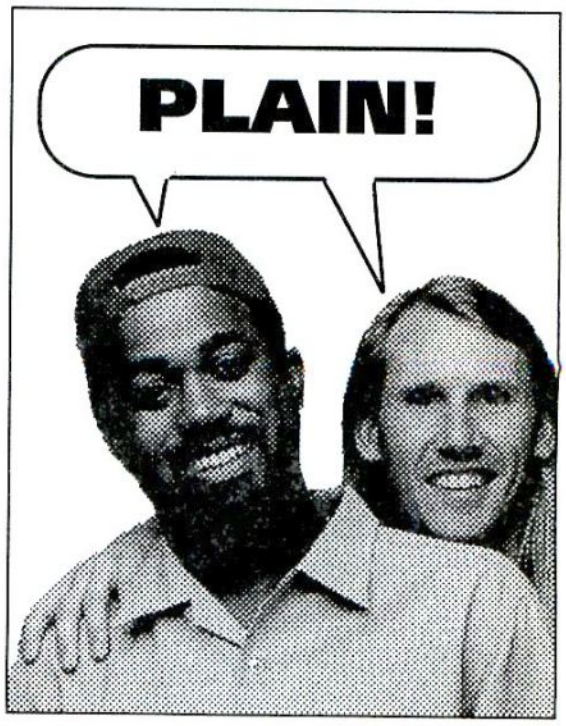


Approximately 50 percent of those who try orchiectomies end up killing themselves. Most doctors agree the act stems from a serious, unresolved Oedipal complex, though schizophrenics have been known to do it following Biblical delusions and hallucinations. While the first case history above stemmed from the death of a parent, other scissors-happy fellows have blamed the loss of a pet dog or bird as the catalyst for their actions.

—Rod Lott

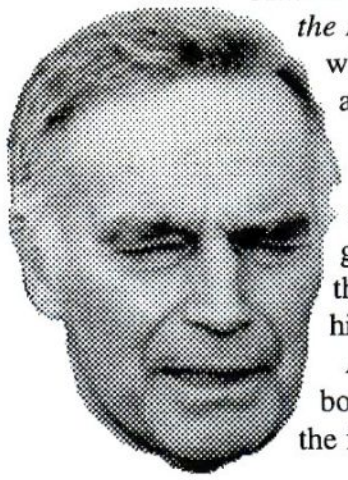






The Agony and the XXXtascy

Our friend Charlton Heston (see **HITCH** 5) is more than just an actor; he's an author. And last year, he released another autobiography, this one called *In the Arena*. In this tome, Chuck talks at length about his clashes with directors, involvement with the National Rifle Association and outrage with rap music.



With the latter, Chuck takes particular issue with an Ice-T song whose lyrics read, "She pushed her butt up against my dick, it got hard..." Chuck calls the tune "obscene" and "disgusting." But Ice-T's not the only one who's penned an ode to the male member and shared it with the public. Why, El Cid himself has proved el seedy!

And it's right there in Chapter 20 of *In the Arena*. In fact, the book contains many references to Heston's penis, buttocks and the functions thereof. Holy Moses! Here now, a sampling:

—Rod Lott

Chapter 15	"As for the maitres d' in the various hotels, they were all aware of the notoriously insatiable sexual appetites of film stars." "We even found time to discuss the film...often ending up in some dirt-floored brothel staffed with fifteen-year-olds. Renting a semen receptacle has never appealed to me."
Chapter 16	"There was such a woman in Michelangelo's life. He probably bedded her."
Chapter 17	"I didn't need...clean underwear, I could crap in the bushes." "Frank wanted me naked for the trial scene, but he shot from the rear. (One of the girls supplying coffee on the set said archly, 'Mmmm, nice buns.')"
Chapter 20	"You can imagine my shock when the dressings came off the next day and I found the equipment had turned a virulent and multi-hued purple...balls and all." *"I've never seen a purple cock.* *I never thought there'd be one.* *But think of this, to ease the shock:* *Be glad it's not a wee one."*

Fast Food HORRORS! at 37,000 Feet

Recent atrocities commited by our major airlines:

Aloha – Let ice machine and cooler grow slime mold, as well as stored beer cans under sewer lines.

Continental – Meat and egg meals for first-class patrons were stored 15° above the maximum temperature to fight bacteria.

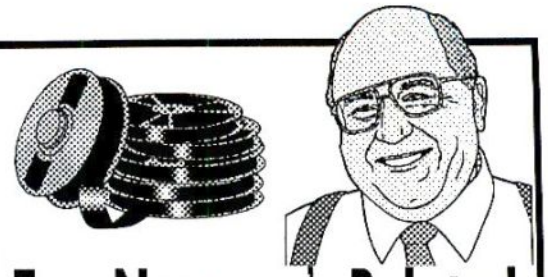
Delta – Stored coffee pots and lids in a dirty sink.

Southwest – Had no sanitary solution to clean eating utensils.

United – Received 162 food complaints in six-month period in 1995, including:

- a live slug found in a plate of pork;
- a dead moth found in a breakfast biscuit;
- black hairs found tucked into cinnamon rolls;
- glass shards found in salmon, lasagna and other dishes;
- a large worm found under salad leaf;
- half a dead spider found on fruit plate.

USAir – see Continental.



Tom Neesnan's Belated Movie Reviews

Tap
(1989)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

This film starring an excellent performing artist that I believe was Lionel Richie dazzled me greatly. It took me back to the days when tap dancing was popular, not Rubik's Cubes. See this film and you will most definitely be ready to tap yourself crazy!

Sing
(1989)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

In a film like no other, starring young folks, there is much celebration and happiness. Scenes in Brookly, New York are very realistic, depicting a city I know only from storybooks I studied while a youth at Progwill School for Youths. See this film soon, because excerpts from it will make you pleased.

Perfect
(1985)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

In a film starring the guy from the excellent *Grease Monkey*, there is much great film work to be praised. The depiction of a style of life like no other comes to life in vivid colors. There was one line early in the movie that you should like!

Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo
(1984)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

In this non-documentary, there is "a whole lot of shakin' goin' on!" Ha-ha! You know where that line comes from. Youths spin and spin like new tops in this film that will bring pleasure and amusement to its viewers. One particular part that grabbed my attention was when this particular "breaker" spun on his back like a turtle! I predict this'll "break" box-office records!

My Garage Sale Diary II

9:41 a.m. An old woman with a silly hat approaches me and asks, "Just tell me this: Is the Village People's 'YMCA' anywhere in that box of tapes?"

"No," I say.

"Thanks," she replies, walking back to her car. "Saves me from looking!"

2:20 p.m. A fat woman with few teeth happens upon several electric blankets we are selling. "Oh!" she cries with joy, "I've been lookin' all over for these!"

Bringing the stack of blankies to the check-out card table, she tells us, "I need them to keep my roosters warm before they fight."

3:54 p.m. An old man drives up in a junky, mufferless car. He hobbles out and begins the walk up our drive. He is wearing pants hiked up so far that they rest over his belly and expose his ankles. Upon his head sits a cap with a stuffed-animal fox head on the front. He tells us he is here for the VHS movies.

During his 10-minute stay, he spouts such fortune-cookie wisdom as "You have only one life to live," "Nobody ever did anything great without trying" and "I found a copy of that Tom Selleck western *Quigley Down Under* the other day, still in its original wrapper for 49 cents. Is that a bargain or what?"

I do everything in my power to keep from laughing. I fail.

—Rod Lott

SAID

"That *Independence Day* movie was awful. It didn't have but 15 minutes of fightin' in it, and all the rest was just strategies."

—Bored moviegoer

"The individual members of Journey put aside their individual differences and got back together one more time for their fans!"

—Casey Kasem

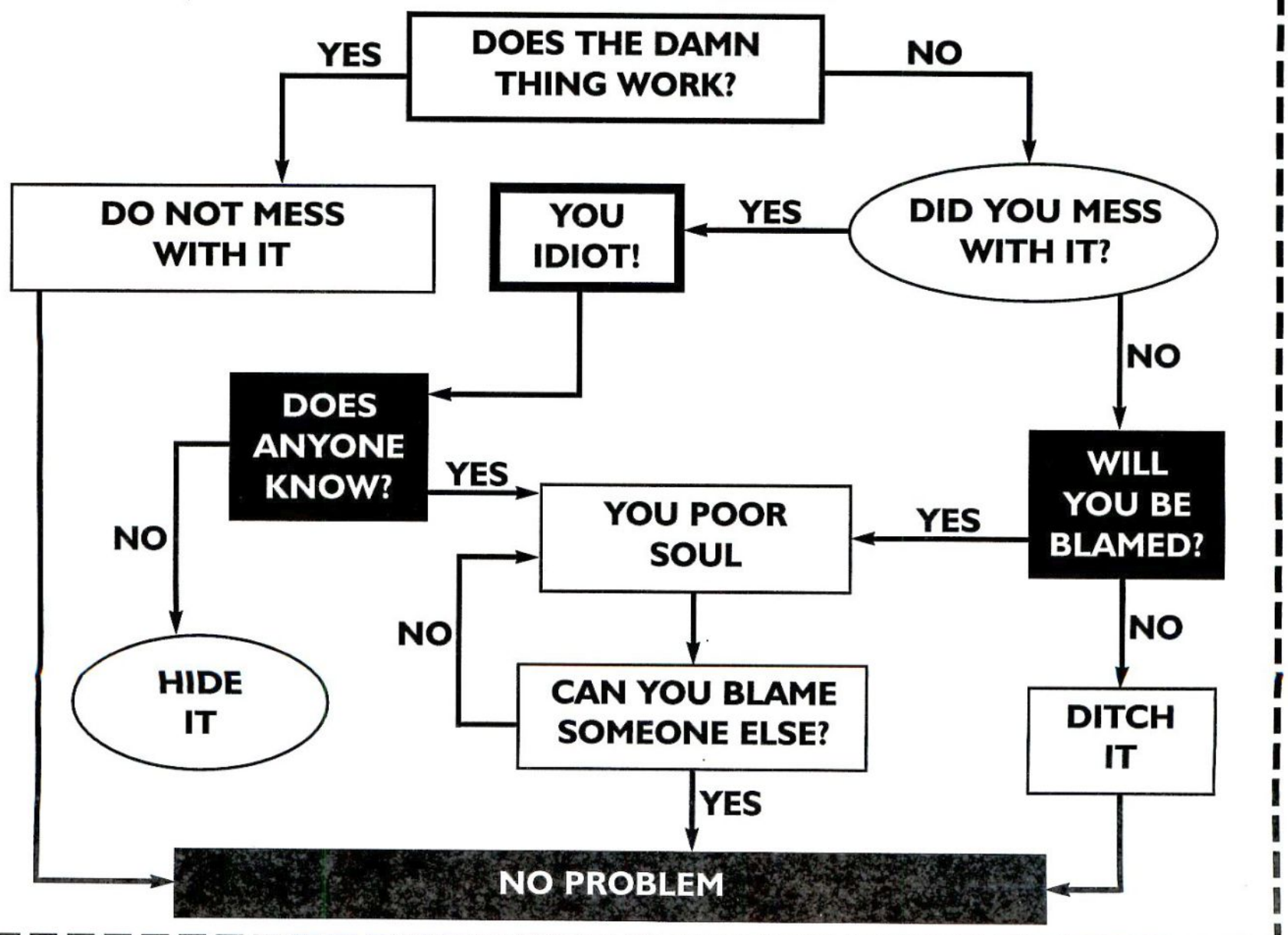
"That win was worth two smokes!"

—Obese, nicotine-craving female fan, following high school ballgame victory

"Woody or Bud Light?"

—White trash woman at Burger King, asking her child which Toy Story *figure he preferred to have*

Foolproof Problem-Solving Flowchart



Counting Carts!

The half-mile stretch of Terrace Avenue that runs north of Lincoln and south of Harry (see map) is where one will find many of Wichita's down-and-outers and ne'er-do-wells. Most of these folks do their beer and cigarette shopping at the neighborhood Albertson's grocery store.

Since a case of Old Milwaukee and a carton of KOOLs can become heavy and cumbersome to carry – and since they don't have the benefit of conventional transportation – they cart their vices home in an Albertson's shopping cart. The seemingly endless influx of the wobbly four-wheeled wire baskets into the neighborhood sparked the advent of a fun new game for residents and tourists alike – "Counting Carts!"

Here's how it works:

Requirements for Players

☉ Must be able to count.

How to Play

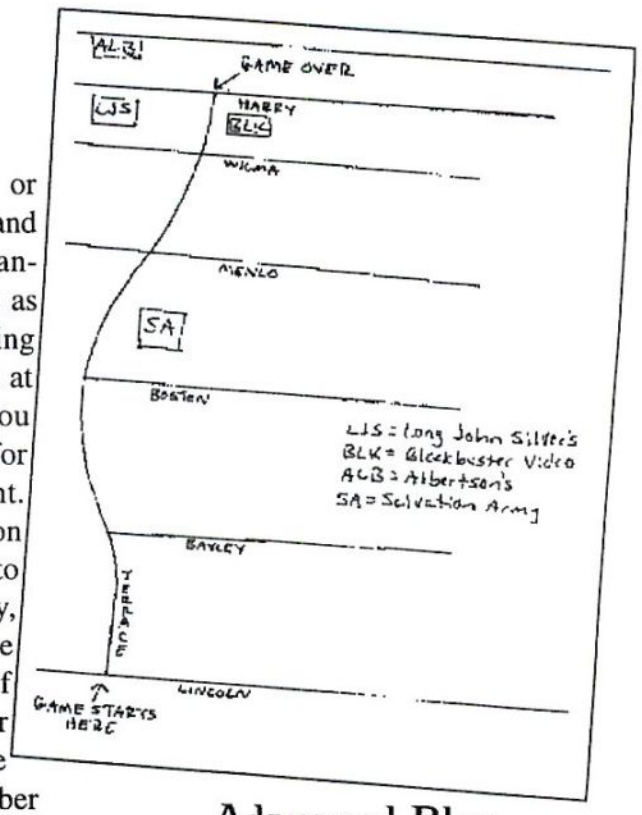
The game begins as soon as the front wheels of your car touch Terrace Avenue from either Lincoln or Harry. Drive slowly and count as many abandoned shopping carts as possible while avoiding being carjacked, shot at or murdered. You receive one point for each cart you count. The game ends as soon as your car turns onto Lincoln or Harry, depending upon where the game began. The object of the game is to try to beat your high score from the last time you played. Given that the number of carts can vary widely several times a day, unpredictability is a major factor in the game's fun.

Tips & Tricks

☉ There is no time limit, so take the time to look east and west on all side roads and alleys, and by the dumpster behind Blockbuster Video.

☉ Don't forget to check the house across the street from the Salvation Army; they usually have at least two or three in the front yard.

☉ Play the game while school is out. Remember, more kids = more carts!



Advanced Play

☉ If a cart is not merely abandoned but is actually being pushed, add half a point.

☉ If a cart is being pushed and contains more than four cases of beer, add two points (not valid on Friday or Saturday evenings or the first of the month.)

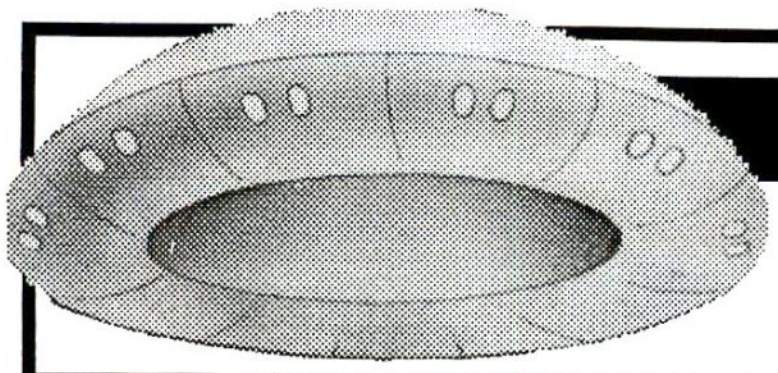
☉ If the cart belongs to any store other than Albertson's, add one point.

Below are the results of my game-playing up to presstime. Be sure and log on to the official "Counting Carts!" homepage at *http://www2.southwind.net/~kend/carts.html*.

—Ken Davis

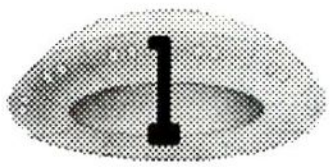
8/31/96, 11:30 a.m., 6
8/31/96, 11:47 p.m., 7
9/1/96, 9:30 a.m., 5
9/1/96, 11:06 a.m., 6
9/3/96, 7:28 a.m., 9
9/3/96, 5:32 p.m., 10
9/3/96, 7:48 p.m., 11
9/4/96, 7:42 a.m., 8
9/4/96, 9:28 p.m., 8
9/5/96, 5:33 p.m., 0
9/5/96, 7:44 a.m., 2
9/6/96, 5:38 p.m., 3
9/7/96, 4:12 p.m., 7
9/8/96, 11:23 a.m., 9
9/8/96, 6:03 p.m., 2
9/10/96, 8:48 a.m., 1
9/11/96, 9:27 p.m., 4
9/12/96, 10:22 a.m., 3
9/13/96, 5:50 p.m., 9
9/13/96, 6:33 p.m., 13
9/14/96, 12 p.m., 11
9/14/96, 4:43 p.m., 14
9/15/96, 1:33 p.m., 14
9/16/96, 7:42 a.m., 15
9/18/96, 6:18 p.m., 9
9/19/96, 6:57 a.m., 11
9/21/96, 1:37 p.m., 13
9/21/96, 10:15 p.m., 14
9/25/96, 9:45 p.m., 7
9/26/96, 7:47 a.m., 7
9/29/96, 2:12 p.m., 5
10/2/96, 7:33 a.m., 8
10/2/96, 9:57 p.m., 11
10/4/96, 5:18 p.m., 4
10/5/96, 11:18 a.m., 6
10/5/96, 3:43 p.m., 9
10/6/96, 5:23 p.m., 11
10/9/96, 9:27 p.m., 6
10/11/96, 7:25 a.m., 4
10/11/96, 6:14 p.m., 8

10/12/96, 12:30 p.m., 7
10/14/96, 6:55 a.m., 5
10/17/96, 5:18 p.m., 3
10/18/96, 1:27 p.m., 5
10/19/96, 3:50 p.m., 7
10/20/96, 11:15 a.m., 8
10/22/96, 6:19 p.m., 11
10/23/96, 9:56 p.m., 10
10/24/96, 5:21 p.m., 11
10/27/96, 10:33 p.m., 9
10/27/96, 4:06 p.m., 12



HITCH *Vox Populi*

#3 : UFOs



These "little green men"...are they really green?

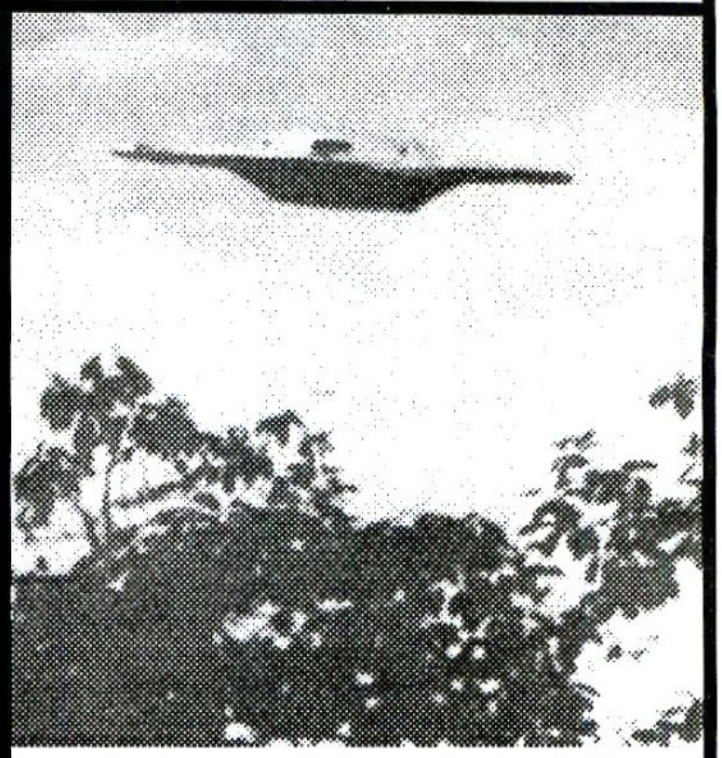
◆ Definitely – green being the most suitable color for glowing in the dark.
◆ No, but light refraction from Oz makes them appear that way.
◆ Of course they're green. You just said they were!

Yes
20%

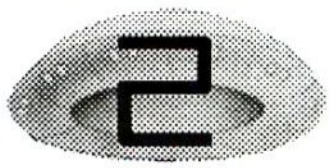
No
80%

Of those who said "Yes,"

Turquoise	37.5%
Gray	25%
Black	12.5%
Orange	12.5%
Clear	12.5%



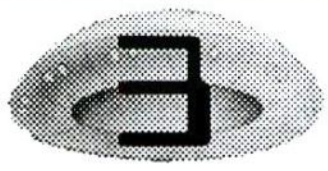
A "flying saucer," photographed in 1969 by José Carrasco of Central Brazil, seems to fit Dr. Tombaugh's description.



If aliens could abduct one hair-metal band of the '80s, which one should go?

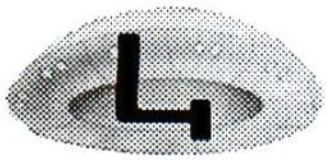
◆ Dammit, if they traveled 80 gazillion light years across space, they surely have the means to take more than one.
◆ Every single last one of those bastards! Cut them up like filthy cows.
◆ They would set their tractor beams straight on Warrant, study them for a bit, conclude that no intelligent life exists on Earth, then split.
◆ As far as I'm concerned, you can hurtle them all toward the sun.

Poison	21.4%
Cinderella	14.3%
Warrant	14.3%
Twisted Sister	14.3%
Great White	7.1%
Van Halen	7.1%
Dokken	7.1%
Ratt	7.1%
Nelson	7.1%



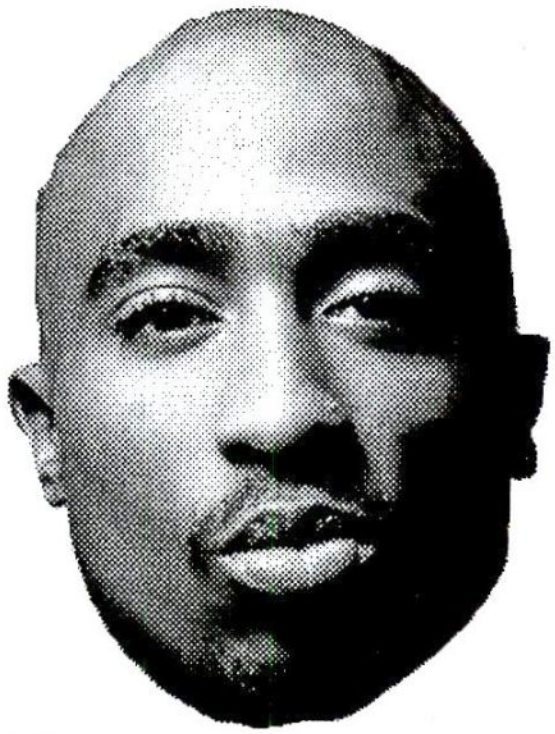
How could Martha Stewart spruce up the interior of a UFO?

◆ The aliens could "death-ray" Martha so her innards could splash the interior of the space-age polymer vessel a lovely, reddish pink, with bits o' gray.
◆ With duct tape and chewing gum. Oh, wait, that's MacGyver. I don't know.
◆ Crop circles. Everywhere.
◆ Curvy walls can be difficult to deal with, but a few nice floral arrangements can go a long way. Potpourri baskets can mask stale, recycled space air quite nicely.
◆ A few rugs and some throw pillows and the Reticulans would never recognize the place. Grey metallic can be sooo dreary on those long flights.
◆ Does the phrase "human filet" *give you a clue?*
◆ Make tea cozies from the skin of the unsuccessful human/alien crossbred fetuses.
◆ With a blowtorch, you could melt off some titanium to make kitschy floral arrangement holders. Or you could bash in the oversized skull of an alien with a meat tenderizing mallet, scoop out the innards with an ice-cream scoop and, after a short drying period, use it as a festive salsa bowl.



Conspiracy theorists say that UFOs had a hand in the recent death of rapper Tupac Shakur. Discuss.

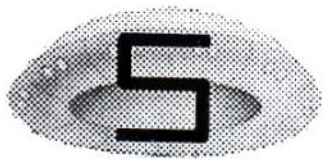
◆ Hey, even aliens know that rap sucks.
◆ The CIA, aware that Tupac was certain to become the next president, put out a contract on Tupac. Aliens, in desperate need of money after spending all of theirs on hookers, accepted. So while a group of aliens disguised as their favorite *Star Wars* characters distracted the crowd with the whole drive-by facade, it was actually the "32nd gunman" on a nearby grassy knoll that put a cap in his ass.
◆ You discuss it. I've got an Oliver Stone essay on "Eleanor Roosevelt: The True Mastermind of the Holocaust" to read.
◆ The aliens *were* going to kidnap Tupac to join the ranks of Elvis. But Tupac got lippy with the aliens and drew a gun. They had little choice but to fight back.
◆ Yes.
◆ As you know, radio and TV signals are broadcast through space. Two words: *Poetic Justice*.
◆ Gosh, I sure hope so.
◆ Yes, but they were aiming for that other guy.



Now you can cast your Vox Populi votes online at **HITCH**'s Wichita Bureau home page:

http://www2.southwind.net/~kend

Two men from Toulouse, France, draw a picture of a "Martian" they said they saw step out of a mysterious object in 1954.



Fran Drescher or anal probe?

◆ Fran, so long as she has a ball gag on at all times.
◆ Is this rhetorical? Anal probe.
◆ Anal probe. It's less painful.
◆ Fran with the probe stuffed in her mouth to shut her up.

Anal probe
53.3%

Administer anal probe to Fran
20%

Too close to call
20%

Fran Drescher
6.6%

This Month in Sexual Harassment in *Beetle Bailey*

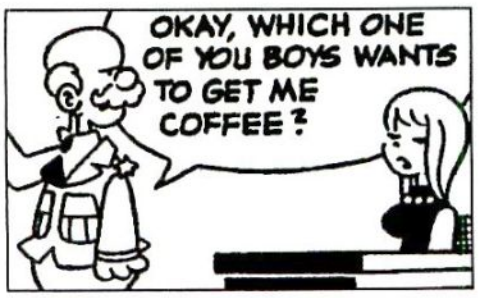
There is simply no place better to find good ol' American family values than in the newspaper funnies, right? The innocence of childhood as lovingly recreated by Bil Keane...the foibles of an adorable cat as captured through the eyes of Jim Davis...the demeaning sexual stereotypes active in the macho military as detailed by Mort Walker?

Believe it. The long-running *Beetle Bailey* seems to focus less on the Army these days than it does depicting women as the lesser sex.

But Beetle is not to blame. Seems as though the General shoulders the most guilt for creating a "hostile workplace environment," primarily for Ms. Buxley, the buxom secretary.

Please study the cartoon crimes as documented here in all their sleaze. Being a moral watchdog, **HITCH** will continue to monitor and keep tabs on *Beetle Bailey*. In between issues, you can visit the official website at *http://www2.southwind.net/~kend/beetle.html* —*Rod Lott*

8/23/96 – The General and his golfing buddy purposely slice their shots so they can stroll by the pool and ogle Ms. Buxley and her bikini-bursting friends as they tan.

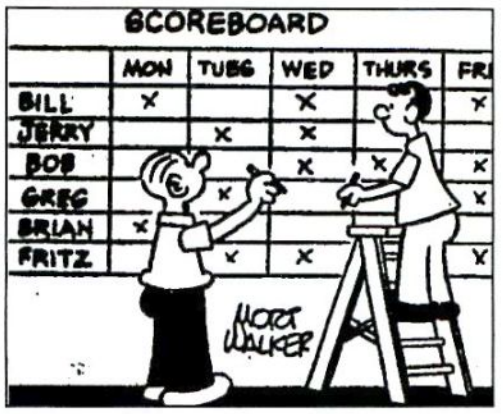


11/13/96 – After being told they don't like to be called "girls," the General goes ahead and demeans them anyway as he barks out an order solely designed to prove their inferiority.

11/15/96 – Alone with a pretty young blonde woman, one of the privates begins to feel his date up – in a surreal moment – with *six* sets of hands, much to her virgin disgust.

11/20/96 – The most alarming incident thus far: The General asks where his red eraser is; Ms. Buxley answers, "Search me." So he literally tries to search her, going in for the grope. Note the symbolism here: Red eraser = nipple.

9/20/96 – The General makes this chauvinist remark: "Well, I guess it's time to go home and see the big woman...formerly known as the little woman."

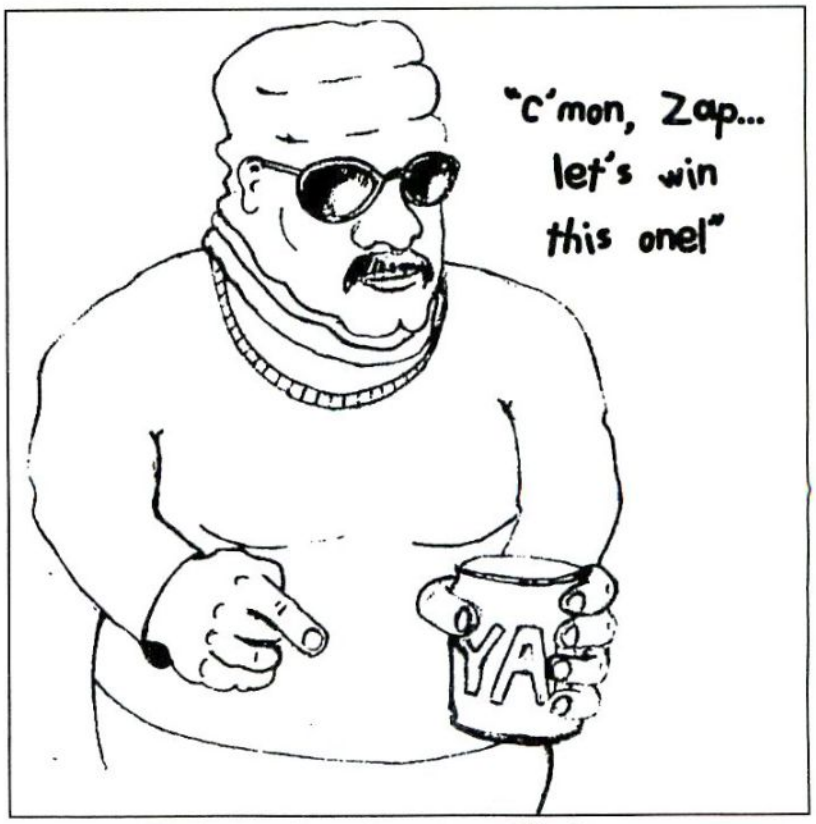


9/18/96 – The guys at the club keep a scoreboard; that is, a tally of their sexual conquests, much to Ms. Buxley's chagrin.

9/25/96 – Cosmo runs a lottery, with the grand prize being a date with Miss Buxley, without telling Miss Buxley of his intentions.

10/9/96 – The General emerges from his office only to yell, "GALS! BABES! CHICKS! BROADS!"

RED BULLARD, TV Aficionado



Red watches *American Gladiators*.

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Tonight on Muck Rakers... The Pope + Jennifer Anniston... Are they an item?
?
FUNNY HAIR
FUNNY HAT

Various Talk show appearances...
Your Holiness, the world is dying to know... BOXERS OR BRIEFS?
What kind of a STUPID-ASSED QUESTION is THAT!?
I should beat you with my CURLY STICK!
CURLY SMITH ™ © REG. PAT.

But the people back at the Vatican aint happy at all...
It's sickening the way the Pope flaunts his worldly excesses and wealth!
Yeah! He should keep it a secret like the rest of us....

HITCH

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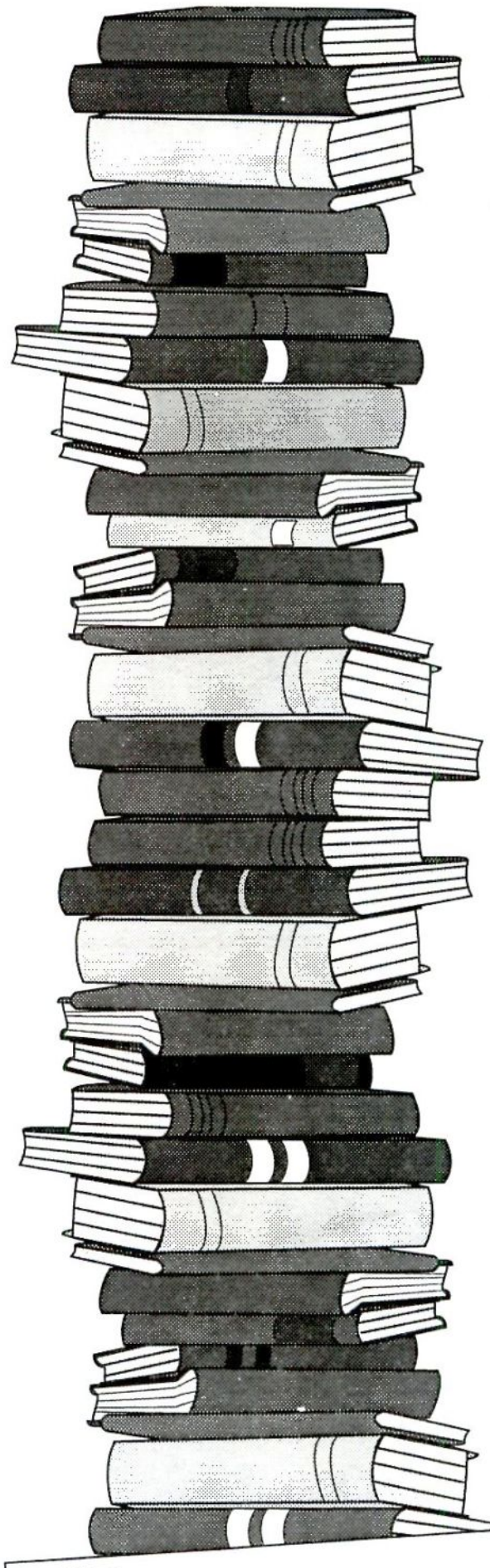
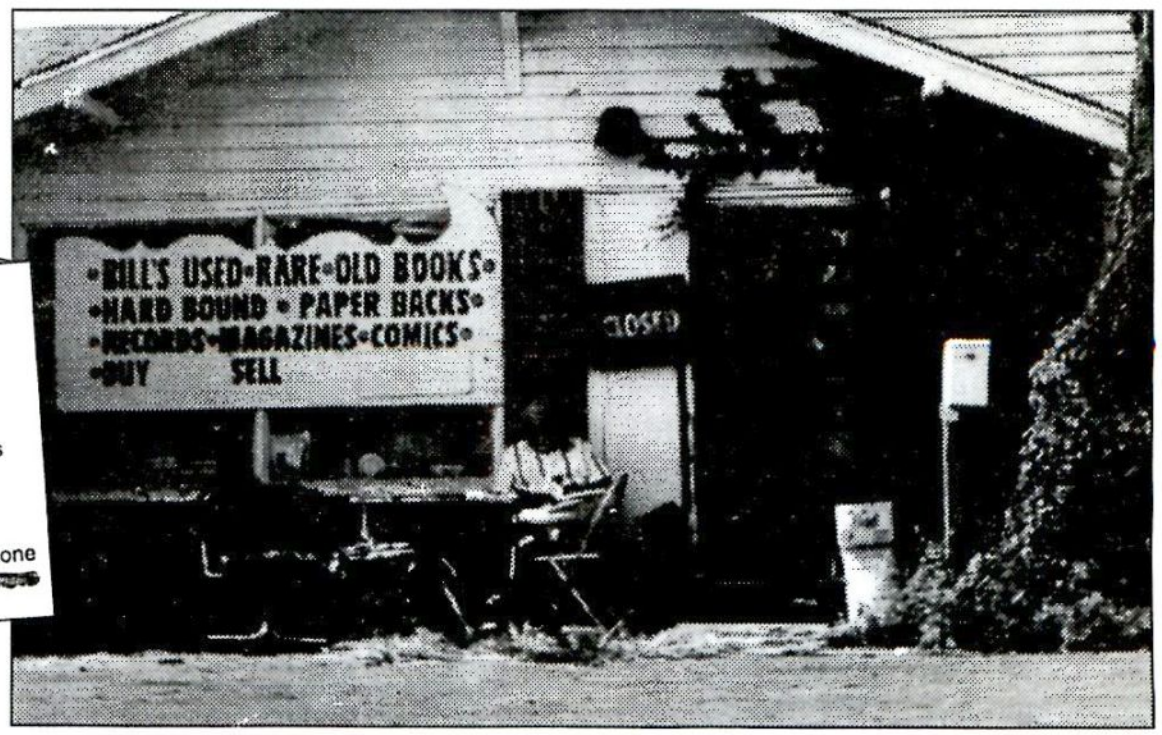


I'm Just BILL, Yes, I'm Only BILL, and I Stack Books Up as High as a HILL



First Editions

BILL'S YESTERDAY BOOKS
Objects Of Nostalgia - Paperbacks - Hardbacks - Comics

1804 N.W. 16th
OKC, OK 73106-2031

Telephone
(405) [redacted]

By Rod Lott and Joe Rogers

Enduring legends are borne of disbelief: Scotland has its Loch Ness Monster, the Himalayas its Abominable Snowman and Oklahoma City, not to be undone, has the Bookman.

Joe had first heard about the Bookman from a college philosophy professor who doted on spinning myths concerning the biblio-obsessed hermit to his students. Joe, thirsting for seeking out such splendidly apocryphal wonders, in turn told Rod. Together, we sought out the mythic lair of the Bookman in no time. Located in the heart of one of OKC's hotbeds of illegal activity (you know, one of the fine neighborhoods regularly sporting standoffs showcased by a 6 o'clock, Johnny-on-the-spot newsteam – a tract oft referred to but never actually visited by political candidates as exemplary of the "sad state of welfare") is Bill's Yesterday Books.

As we arrived, the chunky, braided proprietor – Bill – was seated in a folding chair in the sweltering outdoors, smoking a cigarette and leisurely reading through the new edition of the gripping *Southwestern Bell Oklahoma City Area Telephone Directory*. Our hunt was not derailed by the "CLOSED" sign leaning against the establishment's front, as Joe had been tipped prior by his educator that rumor had it that Bill's Yesterday Books is never officially "open." Rather, the treasury of literature had been classified by crime-busting city officials as a "fire hazard," leaving Bill to face steep consequences and monetary fines if he were found continuing to operate his bookselling service.

We would soon discover why.

"Hi, can I help y'all?" Bill asked as we approached, putting the telephone book down to weave his management magic.

"Yeah, I'm looking for books by Sartre," Joe said. "Got any?"

This rather pretentious request was, of course, a mere untruth – conceived and utilized for the sole purpose of viewing Bill's hallowed halls with our own eyes.

"I have one or two of his books, but I'm not sure where they are," Bill answered. "But you're welcome to go in and see if you can find it."

This, as repetition proved, is Bill's standard reply to any query concerning a book of any type by any author. Say you'd like a book on handwriting analysis (which we asked for, too)? Bill's sure to answer, "I have one or two, but I'm not sure where they are. But you're welcome to look." How about a book on baking cakes? Again: "One or two, but I'm not sure where they are. You're welcome to look."

No matter what the tome being sought, Bill had it...somewhere.

You see, as is apparent from one's first careful step squeezing through the front door, Bill's Yesterday Books is not the nicely organized, aesthetically pleasing publication warehouse like a Waldenbooks or Barnes & Noble that you're used to visiting.

Instead, Bill's Yesterday Books is a *whole damn house* with no living space whatsoever. Books are literally (and pat yourself on the back, dear reader, if you caught that pun) piled to the ceilings, with a foot-wide pathway rudely carved through the rubble that one must shimmy through sideways in order to travel. The place is so overflowing with reading material that the path itself is comprised of volumes. It is near impossible to see the fucking walls most of the time. And a window? Forget about it. There isn't enough sunlight in the place to discourage insects from forming veritable kingdoms in there. With careful balance and a good pair of mountain boots, the home is navigable, but it's a one-way trail, and friend, there ain't no passing once inside.

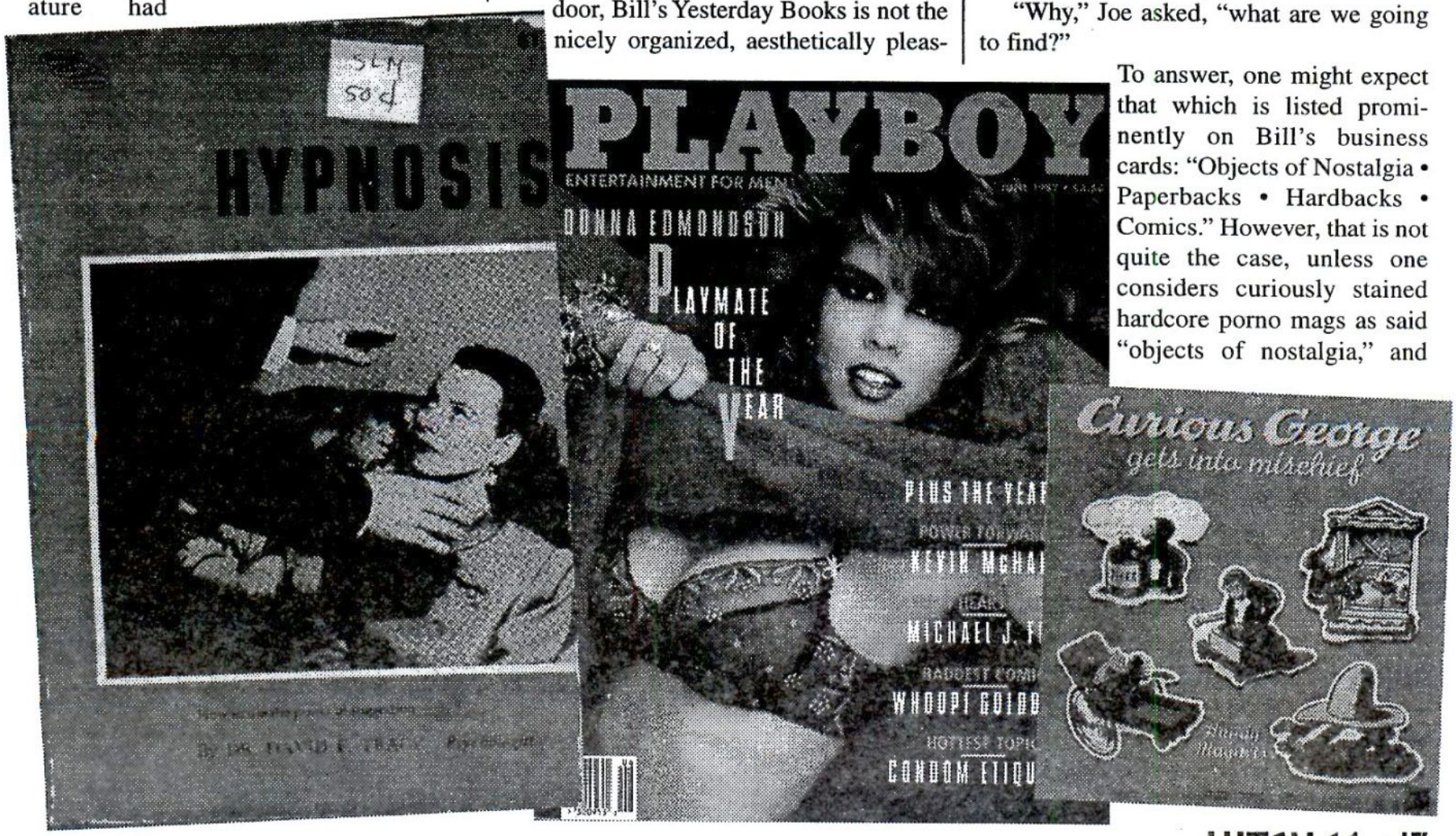
Before we were granted full admittance into the treasure cove, though, Bill posed one important question: "Y'all're 21, aren't ya?"

"Yep," Rod said

"Yeah, I kinda figured so," Bill replied. "I sees you's got hair on your legs. Heh-heh..." (It was an unforgivably hot day, so Rod and Joe both were wearing shorts; Bill was, evidently, the observant type.) Thus, we entered the literary emporium.

"Why," Joe asked, "what are we going to find?"

To answer, one might expect that which is listed prominently on Bill's business cards: "Objects of Nostalgia • Paperbacks • Hardbacks • Comics." However, that is not quite the case, unless one considers curiously stained hardcore porno mags as said "objects of nostalgia," and



judging from the sheer quantity on hand, Bill probably would be quick to make this classification. Sure, the promised paperbacks and hardbacks are in plentiful supply, but they all are covered with layers of dust and film so thick that it would take a four-pack of Ivory soap bars to wash off your fingertips. For the record, we spotted no comics.

Joe and Rod inched their way through the 1,300 square feet of filth, stepping on pieces of foam mattress, oily rags, dog-eared macho adventure novels and the occasional ripped page from *Fiesta* or *Playgirl*, allowing a surgically enhanced breast or unbelievably engorged body part to peek through the mess. Rod surmised that this must be the only place in the world where *Curious George Makes Mischief* and *Santa's Activity Book* can co-exist peacefully with used (in every sense of the word) back issues of *Hustler* and *Penthouse*.

"Now, if I told you I had a house full of books, you wouldn't believe me, right?" Bill said proudly.

"No, no, we believe you," Rod said.

"Yeah...well, this here's a house full of books!" reiterated Bill.

"So we see," Joe mumbled, slipping on a trig textbook.

Ambling our way from one pile to the next (and totally dependent on the other for further movement), Rod pointed out a Taco Mayo cup with the straw still attached jammed between a spy thriller called *Soviet House* and a sci-fi sex-'em-up titled *Veronique* alongside an empty Prince Albert package. Bill soon had stumbled into the only space he'd left empty – we suppose one might generously grace it with the euphemism "office space" – and sat down on a chair beside one of those refrigerator doors inscribed with the word "MEATS."

"I've got about 200,000 books in here," he said. "There's another 160 pounds of books in my van out there. Y'know that tan van outside? It's full of books. Books I don't have room for in here!" Bill laughed.

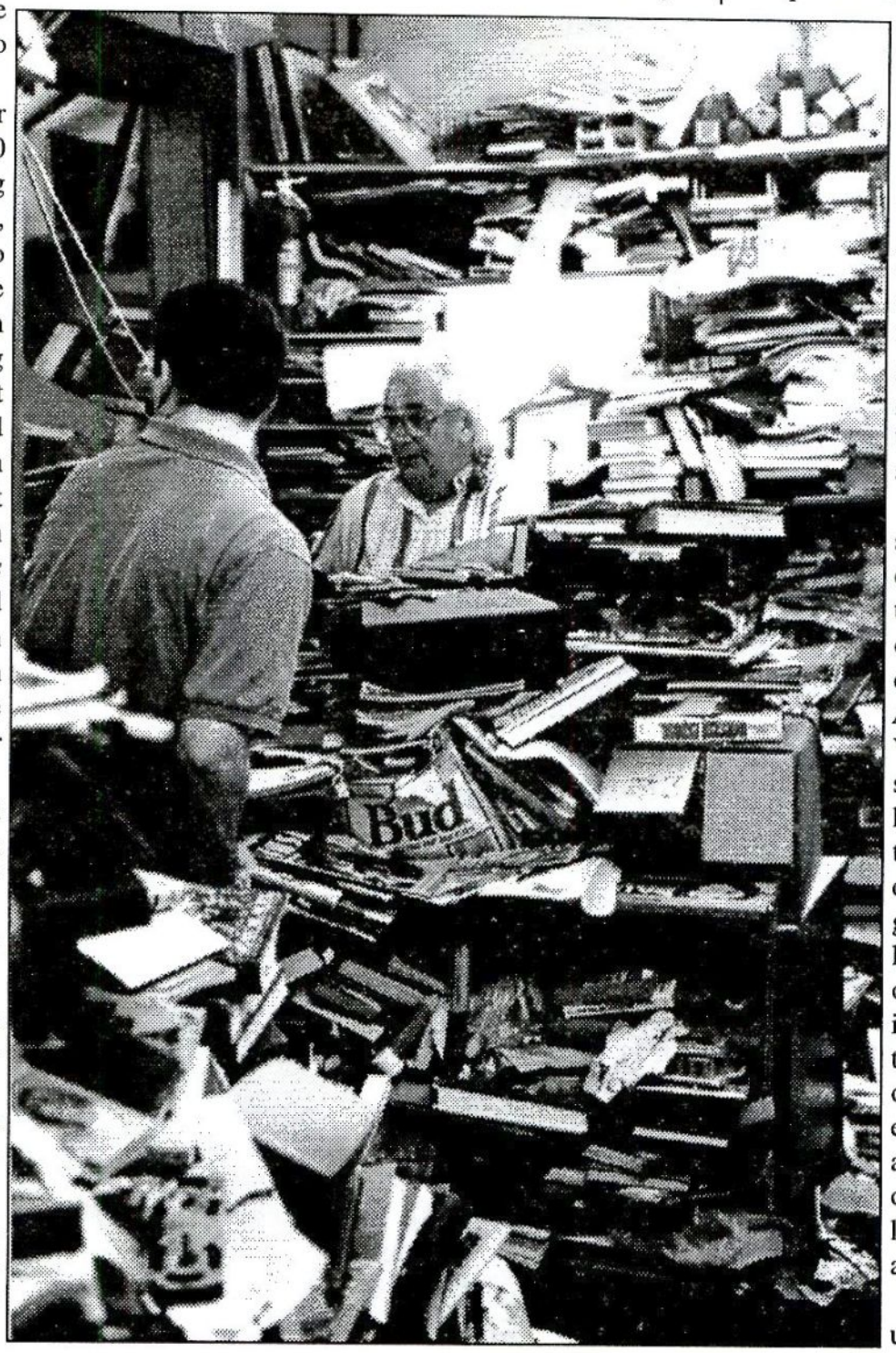
"Yeah," Joe said.

"What, you don't believe me?" Bill said, ever defensive. "Where would you suggest I put 'em?"

"No, we believe you," Joe said. "As in where in the hell else would you put them?"

Rod worked up the nerve to ask, "Do you actually *live* here?"

"No. Used to. Yeah, before I got married seven years ago, this was my bachelor pad," Bill said, waxing nostalgic. "I'm lookin' to get a portable building that I can move into and put some of my books. I'd like to open a shop there. I figure that if I move 100 boxes of books, then I can get this place cleaned out."



Rod and Bill eye a pesky rodent. Fire hazard, you say? *Nonsense!* Note extinguisher, upper left, and box of Bud, center. Two pages prior, Bill engages in his "personal reading time" with the Book of SWBYP's as he sits under the deceptive "CLOSED" sign.

"Sounds like a lot of work," Rod noted.

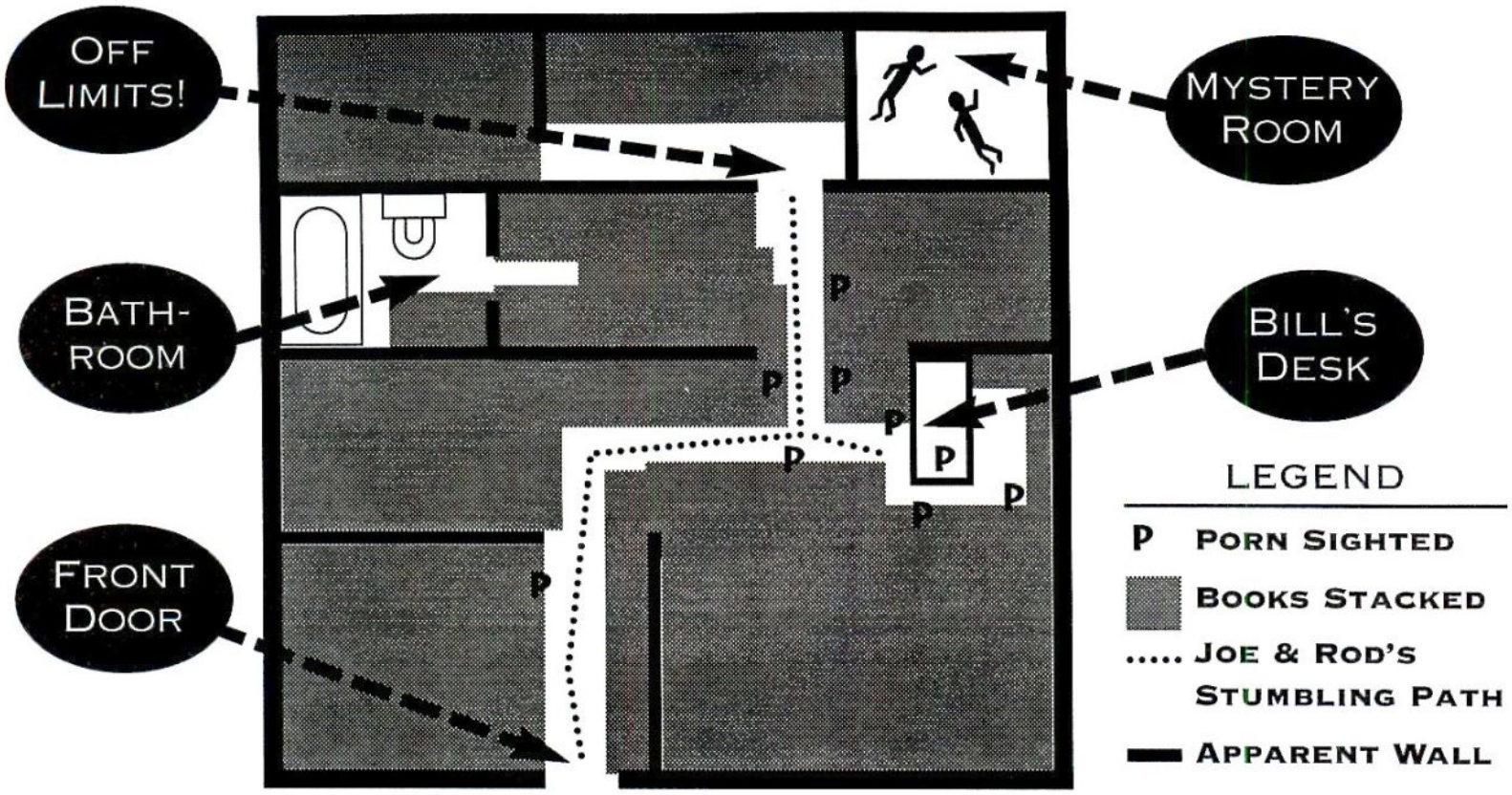
"Oh, I don't mind the work, mind you. It's the money," Bill stated. "I don't have it. Now, if each of you want to donate $30,000, then I can get it done. But here we are in an election year, getting ready to decide who's gonna run the country, and I ain't got the money. It's not tricklin' down, is it? See any?"

Following that bizarre segueway, Rod left Joe to chat while he explored further. Through the scattering of videodiscs (which included *Oh, God!* and *Missing in Action II*), disassembled VCRs and stereos and thousands and thousands of hideous reads, Rod was able to spot a bathroom, yet wondered how Bill would ever get to it, even though the light in the toiletry area was on. The very back room – into which we were told not to enter – contained a bunch of records (Shaun Cassidy; early, sexually ambiguous albums of Hall and Oates; other '70s relics) and clothes littered here and there. Oh, and books.

"You know," Bill continued, tangent-happy, "there've been four wars since, well, since the last hundred years."

"That right?" Joe commented politely.

"Yessiree," said Bill, who sat above the videotapes *Playboy Video Centerfold: Teri Weigel* and some X-rated thing called *8-Ball*, "now lessee...of course, World Wars I and II, then there's Vietnam, and then there's...oh! The Spanish-American War. That's four wars. Now, just think how much scrap metal has been used since these last hun-



dred years."

"Yeah, that's a lot of...scrap metal," Joe said.

"A *lot*," said Bill. "This here's my typewriter. I can type on an index card here..." – he held a green card up for purposes of demonstration, because visuals work best when clarifying a point – "...and send it out to whoever asks for such-and-such book sayin' if I do or don't have it. I've got the first edition of this one book. I didn't make that up, 'cause it says on it, 'first edition.' Got the dust jacket and everything. I've also got an autographed limited edition Kurt Vonnegut Jr. book. It's $50. You wouldn't think I've got any books, but I've got a house full of books here!" He paused to scratch his head before asking, "Now, what did you say you were looking for?"

"Sartre," Joe said.

"Hmmm...is he, like, an Oriental philosopher?" Bill asked.

"Not really," Joe replied. "He was from France."

"I mean, is he, like, *om* and all that?"

Om, being about as French as basmati rice, gave Joe a fair indication of Bill's listening aptitudes. "You got it," Joe said, to get off the subject. It didn't work.

"Yeah, philosophy. Well, I've got that Nietzche thing, that Zaroa, Zarom, y'know..."

"*Zarathustra*," Joe clarified.

"Well, whatever it's called, I've got it. Hey, you interested in that Oriental stuff? Like Kush...Kushmi...Kurmshi! That's it, Kurmshi! You interested in that sorta stuff?"

"Can't say I've heard of him," Joe said. This response led Bill to tell us that his wife was a Cherokee Indian and that he may be part Indian but he hasn't taken the time to trace it but he could if he wanted to but it probably wouldn't matter because with his hair braided, people mistake him for an Indian all the time.

Joe turned to Rod. "So...find anything?"

"Well," Rod said sarcastically, "I can't quite figure out the cataloguing system you've got going here." (In all actuality, Rod did spot an interesting tome on UFOs and the Bermuda Triangle, but it would've taken the raising of a wall or an act of God to reach it.)

"Well, that's alright," said Bill, "'cause I can't figure it out either! It's a house full of books!"

"So," Rod said, placing one sandaled foot in front of the other with the grace usually reserved for the likes of the Flying Wallendas, "how do you keep these books from falling down? I'm afraid if I picked one up, the piles would come tumbling down on me."

"To tell you the truth, one day I had four landslides," Bill admitted. "About the time I got it back up, it'd come down again. Y'know, if I get all my books in a portable building, I can get this cleaned up."

"I see."

"Yeah, a portable building would be nice. Then I could unload my van!"

At this point – maybe it was the heat – Rod and Joe were both at a loss for words, but mighty Bill kept the conversational ball a-rolling. "See this?" he said, lifting an issue of *Book Buyer's Guide*. "I take this, and this one and this one. This isn't fun readin'. This is my business. I sold a copy of Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* to a fella out in San Francisco. You know that book?"

We answered in the affirmative.

"Well," continued Bill, "they like that kinda stuff out there, y'know. And I sold it to him. I thumb through these magazines here for business. Now, I do like to read for myself, don't get me wrong. I set aside one day a week for personal reading time. Then I can read what I like to." (Aside: From our observations, Bill's personal reading time

This must be the only place in the world where *Curious George Makes Mischief* and *Santa's Activity Book* can co-exist peacefully with back issues of *Hustler*.

is consumed by titty mags and phone directories.) "Y'know, when you drove up, I was checking to see if I was in the phone book this year."

(*Nota bene:* This was a bald-faced lie. Bill had been *reading* that phone book. When we arrived, he was on page three. Honest.)

"My point is that I'm in the phone book after all," Bill said, pleased as punch. "You seen that movie with Steve Martin where he shouts, 'I'm in the phone book! I'm in the phone book!'"

"*The Jerk*," Rod said.

"Yeah, *The Jerk*," said Bill. "'I'm in the phone book! I'm in the phone book!' Well, heh-heh, *I'm* in the phone book!"

"That's good to hear," Rod said.

"Well, I don't do much advertising. It's all word-of-mouth," Bill said.

Joe decided to get confrontational. "So why did your sign say you were closed out front?"

Bill stumbled. "Aw, well, if my van's out front, my regular customers know they can come in....Actually, if you want to know the truth, I just haven't turned it over yet."

"Hmmm," Joe said, and asked Rod if he was ready to go.

"Now hang on," Bill said. "I've got a book around here about philosophy, called something philosophers. Four words. *The Philosophy of Philosophers*? Something like that."

"Well, maybe you can find it and I can come back," Joe said.

"How 'bout I give you a call?" Bill offered.

Joe, wanting to protect his family from such horrors, replied, "Um, how 'bout I call you?"

"Okay," Bill said, and handed us business cards.

Rod, at this point, began to feel sorry for Bill, so he bought the 1952 book *Hypnosis* – presumably to use on the wife – for 50 cents. (Actually, Rod bought it to distract Bill while Joe deviously snapped some photos of the indoor atrocity.)

The living room. Need to take care of some ironing? Typing, perhaps? Note box of "Moist & Meaty" pet food beneath ironing board.

"I haven't read that one, so I can't honestly recommend it," said Bookabilly, presumably too busy with spank mags to deal with such matters.

"Well, I've been looking for this sort of thing for a long time, and I found it here in *this* house!" said Rod, loud enough to mask the sound of the camera shutter.

"Good! You'd find most anything in here, if you look in my cataloguing system," he laughed. "I'm gonna get a portable building, if I can. I've got no complaints, though. The neighborhood's not as bad now that they know I don't have any money. VCRs and stereos is all they're interested in. They want nothing to do with books. I've got a security camera in front, though, so I can see everyone that comes in that door. I'd have to move that into my portable building."

"Along with a few books," Joe said.

"Yeah, a few books! I've got a house full of books!"

As Rod dumped a handful of dimes into Bill's sweaty palm, a box of *Ouis* adjacent to Rod's left shoulder came tumbling to the ground, spilling its naughty contents onto the path.

Bill's head jerked up and cast an accusatory eyebrow at Rod. "Now see what you did?"

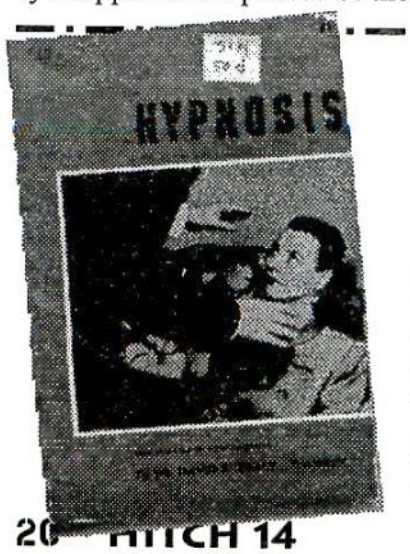
"I certainly didn't touch *that* box," Rod said.

Making our way outside, Joe expressed his relief that Rod – having undergone tailbone surgery a mere three weeks prior – managed *not* to fall inside Bill's Yesterday Books. Then he turned to face Bill again.

"You forgot about Korea," Joe corrected. "The Korean War. That makes five." Bill laughed. "That wasn't a war. That was a police action. Didn't you know that?"

We got into the car and drove off. "Must've picked that line up from a book somewhere," Joe commented.

"I think I have fleas," Rod said. **H**



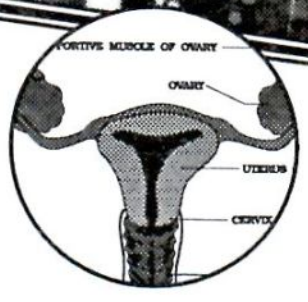
Hypno Tipno!

A selection from Dr. David F. Tracy's book *Hypnosis*

"Here is what to do, for instance, if you have a subject who wants you to break her of eating too much candy. Find out what her favorite candy bar is, buy one without letting her know it. ... Say to her, 'When you take the first bite, you will find that the candy tastes like onions.' Now awaken your subject and hand her the candy. Tell her to eat it, and watch her reactions. The expression on her face will be really comical. She will undoubtedly accuse you of giving her trick candy."

The Seven Deadly Sins of GILLIGAN'S ISLAND

By Rod Lott



Rumor has it that when Sherwood Schwartz created his beloved television series *Gilligan's Island*, he did so with the sole intention of inventing the world's first and only sitcom based upon the time-worn concept of the seven deadly sins. As set forth by the great philosophical minds of the 13th century[1] and in countless *Shazam!* comics, the seven deadly sins are those abhorrent attributes which are held to be fatal to spiritual progress. Those sins are, in no particular order: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth.[1] (In some media, they may be referred to alternately as pride, envy, greed, hatred, selfishness, laziness and injustice.)[2]

"Someone once said that the inhabitants on *Gilligan's Island* represented a variation of the seven deadly sins. Actually, they were broad caricatures of characters we've seen on countless disaster movies," writes Russell Johnson, who portrayed the Professor, attempting to downplay or even totally discount the theory. "Sherwood intentionally organized this diverse group of exaggerated crazies to mirror the American melting pot – all cooking under the pressure of being completely isolated from civilization."[3]

Although the melting pot proposition holds water, it is ludicrous for Johnson to abate the idea of the deadly sins when startling evidence calls for its scrutiny. (His uninformed notion comes as expected, though, being not a scholar, but an actor.) While the perennial rerun favorite has long been viewed by the public and its pundits as a microcosm of society, it is clear that Schwartz had something much more complex and cosmic in mind than mere socioeconomic stereotypes.

Indeed, upon examination of the premise and recurring themes of *Gilligan's Island*, as well as several key episodes, it becomes quite evident that Schwartz may not be just a television visionary, but a wise sage as well.

We now will examine how each of the seven characters on *Gilligan's Island* represents one of the seven deadly sins, following the most logical sequence of character importance – that is, order of mention in its most telling theme song.

Gilligan

As the show's center and the first mate of the doomed S.S. Minnow, the wiry, dopey faced Gilligan represents the deadly sin of sloth, which is defined as "spiritual apathy and inactivity...disclination to action or labor."[1]

Lazy and insolent, Gilligan is often seen sleeping or carousing with an island monkey, rather than praying for salvation. Most every conceivable hope of rescue for the castaways is destroyed or somehow fumbled by Gilligan's ineptness. Perhaps most alarmingly, he threatens the entire existence of the island inhabitants in Episode 14 when he uses and wastes every drop of water of an island in the midst of a vicious drought. In Episode 26, a similar, but decidedly more gruesome, fate hangs over their heads as Gilligan's repeated beating of a drum attracts native tribes who want to go to battle with the castaways. Death is narrowly averted a third time in Episode 50, when Gilligan takes a shine to a WWII mine he finds, not thinking that it might be live, which it later proves very well to be.[3]

In Episode 40, when a working NASA camera washes ashore, Gilligan breaks it. A jetpack with just enough gas to make it to Hawaii is strapped on Gilligan's back in Episode 95, but he wastes the fuel. Thus, it is hard to be sympathetic toward Gilligan in Episode 64, when his hair tonic renders everyone allergic to his presence.[3]

"Lazy hands make a man poor," (Proverbs 10:4)[4] and Gilligan's doltishness dooms him to a life of isolation with no material possessions, save for those the Professor is able to fashion from shoots of bamboo.

The Skipper

Perhaps the most obvious of the seven representations, the Skipper stands for gluttony, since he is very, *very* fat. Early theories that the Minnow sank under the enormous stress of Skipper's heft, however, have since been disproven.

In Episode 32, "Physical Fatness," Skipper tries in vain to lose weight. Although this is the only episode in which his roundness is directly addressed and weaved into the plot,[3] his poundage does not go unnoticed throughout any of the others. Skipper is so obese, so adipose and so corpulent that we do not actually have to witness him sinning to know that he sins. Although several times we see the castaways engorged in mammoth feasts, conventional wisdom holds that Skipper chows down at any given moment of the day, and on anything he so wishes to consume.

Skipper's plumpness is the reason that, in order to reprimand his "little buddy" Gilligan, he always has to swat him with his hat, because this action requires a minimal amount of both energy and physical activity, which is all that Skipper can manage to muster. Conversely, it is Gilligan's laziness that keeps him from high-tailing it to easily avoid such shameful castigation.

Proverbs 23:21 proposes that "drunkards and gluttons become poor,"[4] and while we have yet to catch the Skipper hitting the sauce, it is startlingly obvious that his life on the island is hardly one of upward mobility.

The Millionaire & His Wife

Arguably interchangeable, the eternally snooty Mr. Thurston Howell III and his wife "Lovey" represent the sins of covetousness and pride, with the former defined as an "inordinate desire for wealth or possessions or for another's possessions" and the latter as "inordinate self-esteem...conceit."[1]

Indeed, the couple's hubris and effrontery resonate strongly throughout each episode, with them wearing expensive clothes, smoking from cigarette holders and barking orders at the castaways as if they were residing on a Southern plantation. Interestingly, in Episode 28, when Mr. Howell wins all of Skipper's belongings – including, rather suspiciously, Gilligan – out of a bet, he seeks to sire Gilligan as his permanent houseboy.[3]

Mr. Howell's greed, in particular, often gets the best of him. In Episode 9, "The Big Gold Strike," it is the pratfall-privy Gilligan who falls into a mine filled with riches, yet it is the classic capitalist Mr. Howell who stakes a claim on the excavation. Not long later, in Episode 13, Mr. Howell owes Gilligan $3 million, so he tries to unload an oil company he believes to be worthless; that is, until he hears otherwise on the radio.[3]

Though obviously an educated man, Mr. Howell always fails to learn from his previous mistakes. Similar to the aforementioned mineral-rights incident, Gilligan stumbles upon a treasure chest in Episode 16, so Mr. Howell immediately argues the chest is his rightful property since Gilligan was "working" for him at the time of the discovery. The rest of the castaways doubt such an assertion, so the avaricious codger offers them each a cool $100,000 for their share, only to end up red-faced when the chest is opened to reveal its contents: not

[1]*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1991.

[2]Kupperberg, Paul and Roy Thomas, "Superman and Shazam!," *DC Comics Presents*, Vol. 5, No. 49, New York: DC Comics, 1982.

[3]Johnson, Russell with Steve Cox, *Here on Gilligan's Isle*, New York: HarperPerennial, 1993.

[4]Matthew, Mark, Luke, et al., *New International Version of the Holy Bible*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1978.

precious metals, but mere cannonballs.[3]

The Howells believe themselves to be superior to their fellow island dwellers, going so far as to create their own "country club" on the palm-lined premises, to which no one else is invited to join, with the lone exception of Gilligan in Episode 41, but only because he has won the lottery. Thurston and Lovey truly view themselves as superincumbents, when in reality, it is the others who are truly the well-rounded wholes of the lot; to no avail, the castaways try to teach the Howells some marketable skills when they mistakenly presume their corporation has gone belly-up in Episode 44.[3]

Deuteronomy 7:25 warns, "Do not covet the silver and gold,"[4] yet the Howells do exactly that and more, so it is difficult to feel empathy in the few episodes in which various pieces of Lovey's jewelry are stolen by island visitors.[3]

The Movie Star

Second only to Skipper in their respective sin's outright discernment, the Hollywood starlet Ginger represents lust...and quite well, I might add.

Lust is defined by the following terms: pleasure, delight, intense or unbridled sexual desire, lasciviousness, and intense longing and craving[1] – all which fit Ginger as snug as those tight sequined numbers.

In every way imaginable, Ginger is the kind of woman that every man wants. Not because of her intelligence, kindness or compassion (since we see little, if any, evidence of such characteristics), but because she is dripping with sex. Her firey red hair, her killer smile punctuated with a mole, her shapely figure, her boa, her hip-hugging outfits – all things a man searches for in a mate, yet seemingly can never obtain.

And yet, here she is, all wrapped up in one package – svelte, lissome, creamy – ripe and stranded in an exotic locale with four heterosexual men who likely view such a predicament as a wet dream come true. Without even being conscious of it, she provokes lust in every one of them. When she sings "I wanna be loved by you, just you, and nobody else but you," she does so to an audience of them all, with no one man singled out in particular.

Given this absolute, unconditional, immutable and relentless display of unleashed female sexuality – ostensibly theirs for the taking – and the number of years spent alone on the island, it is not inconceivable to believe that Ginger has had intercourse with every one of them (questionable only in the cases of Mr. Howell's aging ability to perform and the aerodynamic problems posed by Skipper's girth). However, it is also possible that each act may not have been mutually consensual. Coupled with the confines of their surroundings and their presumably bleak chances for rescue, it is not unthinkable for at least one rape to have occurred.

Proverbs 6:25-26 states, "Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adultress preys upon your very life."[4] And while Ginger may not be a prostitute by definition, she has most certainly "racked up the miles," as witnessed by the following exchange in Episode 71 when rescue again appears imminent:

Mary Ann: "Oh, won't it be wonderful when those sailors pick us up, Ginger?"

Ginger: "Won't be the first time it's happened to me, Mary Ann."[3]

Let he who is without sin have first crack at Ginger.

The Professor

While he is undoubtedly the most intelligent of the island's residents and the rightly self-appointed voice of reason (note his stints as a surgeon in Episode 36 and judge in Episode 16[3]), his suggestions and plans are always ruined or devastated – usually because of a fellow islander's ignorance – and thus, the Professor represents anger.

"An angry man stirs up dissension" (Proverbs 29:22),[4] and the Professor's continuing frustration does not yield long-lasting encouragement or optimism from those that look up to him. Just about every object he builds or potion he concocts is destroyed by Gilligan, including the strychnine serum which temporarily paralyzes the buffoon.[3]

In Episode 32, the Professor formulates a dye to signal help, only to find it eaten by Gilligan.[3] It is a wonder that Gilligan is not found dead one morning by Skipper, but luckily, the Professor is able, for the most part, to restrain much of his anger. Rarely does he explode, instead letting it fester underneath into something more hideous than anyone can imagine, and as yet unreleased.

Mary Ann

As the island's only other full-blooded female – the post-menopausal Mrs. Howell is likely as dry as the sand she walks on – the wholesome and virginal Mary Ann is forever in direct competition for the men's affections with Ginger. However, with Ginger being every man's vision of the seemingly unattainable dream girl and ultimate sexpot, and Mary Ann the exact opposite as the typical, dime-a-dozen Girl Next Door, Ginger understandably wins out every time. Mary Ann's doe eyes and black hair are no match for Ginger's pushed-up bosom and exotic red mane. Mary Ann is more like the sister, whereas Ginger is the way-hot babysitter who likes to tease. Therefore, Mary Ann is envy to Ginger's lust.

Mary Ann would like to be Ginger, but her moral upbringing is in direct opposition with this unexpressed desire. The ever-jealous Mary Ann knows damn well that she is not in any danger of having the men lunge at her and grabbing on to her mammaries for dear life as they would Ginger, and yet, if such a thing were to happen hypothetically, Mary Ann would no doubt show her disgust and appall, smiling only on the inside.

In Episode 54, Mary Ann lies about having a boyfriend back home so that her friends will think she is romantically involved. Her motives for doing so are obviously created out of her jealousy of Ginger, who can – and does – attract amorous attention from any living,

breathing man. Nowhere, however, is Mary Ann's intense invidiousness demonstrated so crystal-clear than in Episode 92, "The Second Ginger Grant," in which having amnesia allows Mary Ann's subconscious thoughts to come to the forefront, and she actually *believes* that she *is* Ginger, even going so far as to alter all of Ginger's slinky gowns to fit her less-admirable body.[3]

"For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil possible" (James 5:16)[4] – here, said evil is exemplified in the psychological head-case known as one Mary Ann.

Ultimately, the Minnow's passengers and crew are never really rescued. Even today, through syndication, they remain on that island, day in and day out – the clashing of their sins preventing them from working together successfully to escape back to civilization. In the context of the seven deadly sins, getting off the island of purgatory would represent the gang's collective redemption; however, since they have never attained for or recognized their sins, such actions never come to fruition. Their bumbling and botched attempts at teamwork never get them anywhere but a brief visit from the Harlem Globetrotters.

While the deadly sins are often referred to as "capital sins,"[1] it is important not to confuse them with the concept of original sin. As formulated by Augustine, the doctrine of original sin maintains that Adam's sin of eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden corrupted the entire nature of humanity, with his guilt and punishment passing on to all his descendants, resulting in every human born in a state of sin and naturally predisposed to pursue evil,[5] as well as causing fleas and ticks to jump randomly about the hair of the world's canine population.[6] In the context of *Gilligan's Island*, original sin can be traced back to the ill-fated three-hour tour that resulted in the seven passengers being stranded for life in uncharted waters. While nature had a definitive hand in the deal with its ravaging storms, the blame can largely be placed on Gilligan himself. By "accidentaliy" throwing the ship's radio overboard into the swallows of the sea during the storm[3] – no doubt due to his lack of attention – he is the premiere and ultimate sinner, dooming himself, his shipmates and all their future offspring to a life of sin on the island. H

[5]Microsoft Corp., "Sin," *Microsoft Encarta '95*, Redmond: Microsoft, 1994.

[6]Matthews, Dave, "What Would You Say?," *Under the Table and Dreaming*, New York: RCA Records, 1994.

A HE-MAN ADVENTURE

In Space, No One Can Hear You Yawn

By Rod Lott

One would think – judging from the brochures that cry out "VISIT SPACE!" – that a trip to the Kansas Cosmosphere & Space Center in the otherwise unvisitable town of Hutchinson would allow you to see:

a) actual control decks from the Apollo ships;

b) a real, live satellite once sent to snap photos on Mars; and

c) scads and scads of moon rocks.

Instead, you get:

a) a fake control deck used for the film *Apollo 13*;

b) a fiberglass replica of a satellite once sent to snap photos on Mars; and

c) one moon rock.

Oh, there are also fecal containment units, an old tire and a rubber chicken.

Houston, we have a problem.

Still, two bucks is not an altogether unjust price to pay to see astronaut diapers, as my three companions that day all agreed. "Where are the Martians?" Ken demanded to know.

The Cosmosphere is a two-story outfit, complete with planetarium and an Omnimax theater, both of which cost extra. I tooled around with the idea of going to see the Omnimax presentation of *Special Effects*, until I noticed that one of the films prominently featured was Shaquille O'Neal's *Kazaam*.

Outside the doors of the planetarium sits a large, yellow funnel, which demonstrates the concept of orbiting for those visitors that drop coins into it. We fed it a constant stream of pennies for about four minutes straight. "We are easily amused," I muttered, thinking what a clever ruse the funnel is in soliciting more funds to keep the gift shop stocked with freeze-dried peaches.

"Where *are* the Martians?" Ken again demanded.

Despite the many informational booths at hand, I was most intrigued by the display of poop chutes and urinal sacks that the astronauts had to use. One looked caked. I imagine many parents have a hard time explaining this particular exhibit to their curious, space-obsessed offspring.

We also sat in on "Dr. Goddard's Lab," where a relatively plump woman with no public speaking skills demonstrated how rockets work. To do this, she used such items as helium, fire and the aforementioned rubber chicken. Things blew up. It was cool.

There was also this real nerdy kid of about eight or nine years of age that wouldn't stop asking his humongous father questions and often paused to *talk* to the displays. I felt sorry for him up until the point he started having a conversation with an astronaut suit.

"Where are the Martians?" Ken cried.

I vaguely recall staring in wonder at a used tire that came from one of the space shuttles. It was ripped up. Accompanying it was a video loop of a shuttle landing, but it – like all the other "press this button to watch" displays – didn't work.

NASA freakin' technology. H

HITCH's Exclusive *Race to Baldness*

By Rod Lott and Ken Davis

Fate. Kismet. Curse.

Whatever word you prefer to bandy about regarding my predicament, it's all the same: I'm a-goin' bald.

There's no turning back, either. It's as if that old, withered gypsy from *Thinner* had approached me on the street, brushed my cheek with the back of his hand and whispered, "Thinner," yet referring not to my girth but my hair.

I wish I could blame it on such an encounter, but I can trace it all to the mighty sperm swimming around in the Lott and Montgomery family streams. My dad is bald. *His* dad was bald. My other grandfather was bald, too. His brother is bald. Their dad was bald. Hell, I'm sure they had *pets* that were bald, too. While I feel utterly fortunate to have acquired the renowned Lott good looks and smarts, I can't help but accept the utter crush of defeat that evidently goes along with it. The genes are sometimes unkind.

For most all of my 25 years, I have been deluged with countless comments and cracks about my destiny. My father used to have the ability to drive my brothers and I to tears by teasing us about the fate ready to befall us, but we were in grade school at the time, and telling us we couldn't have Silly Putty would provoke the same reaction, too. As we all grew into puberty, we were blessed with thick, prodigious heads of beautiful dark hair, mine particularly inky.

It was not until recently, however, that I had a reason *not* to let those jibes go directly out the other ear.

I think the 180° must have occurred one Saturday morning during a haircut. My barber – who resembles a female Yoda, by the way – used to go on and on about what a pretty head of hair I possessed. On this day, though, such compliments ceased. Instead, she chose to ask (use best Frank Oz voice here), "Rod, have you been pulling out your hair?"

"No," I said. "Why?"

"Well, it looks like you've lost some."

I didn't tip her that day.

True, every waking morning I can remember would result in a few stray hairs on the pillow or in the hands after a good, hard shampoo. But no one – myself included – seemed to miss those. My suspicions were *confirmed the next trip* to the barber, when she gave me a tube of some new-fangled hair stimulator gel...*on the house.*

Now my noggin is the subject of ridicule at least once a week. Most recently, a bird shat on my cap, so I put in the dishwasher; as a result, the relentless jets of hot water removed all signs of doody, but left at least 20 hairs!

I can clearly see my scalp in front, and I'm told the back is even more exposed. Luckily, the hair loss extends no further than said scalp. Rather than whine on about it, I have accepted it. I will apply no Rogaine. I will join no Hair Club for Men. I will receive no hair weave.

If God has singled me out to be bald, then by God, I will walk his green earth bald!

Besides, I'm happily married and have had lots of sex by now, so what does it matter anymore?

—Rod Lott

Lt. Dan in the heart-warming *Forrest Gump* had a destiny: to die in the field with his men.

I, too, have a destiny: to be the first bald man in my immediate family, and I'll be damned if some grass-cutting, shrimp-catching, ping-pong-playing, Jenny-loving simpleton screws it up for me.

To look at me, you'd never guess that I am on my way to becoming a chrome dome. Except for the top of my melon, I'm a hairy beast. I have a hairy chest, hairy arms, legs and (if I don't monitor it closely) nostrils. Hell, I even have bushy eyebrows.

Except for the lady my uncle recently married, my family isn't plagued with hair loss. Unlike many who lose their hair, I never saw it coming. There were no thunderbolts of warning, no sirens announcing my impending doom. A few years ago, I had moved away from home and accepted a job in Kansas City where I knew no one. I arrived in Kansas City with a full head of wavy brown hair. Six months later, I went home for the holidays where my Mom first pointed out that I had no hair on the back of my head.

I returned to Kansas City a broken man.

I've had a rash of misfortunes in my 28 years on this planet: broken foot, tonsils removed, heart surgery, glasses, braces and pimples. Baldness is the next step in my evolution of medical and cosmetic deficiencies. I'm not bitter; in fact, I embrace the idea of baldness. To whine and moan about my lack of protein bearing follicles would be to scoff at my Creator.

So, let me lose my hair with the expedience of a Ron Howard! Let me become a Jason Alexander! Let it all fall out!

—Ken Davis

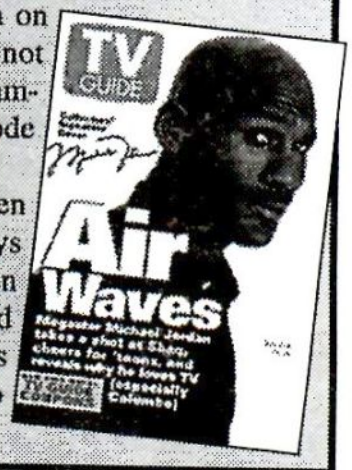
KEN'S OMEN

As the Hair Prix officially commenced, Ken noticed a peculiar coincedence that he took to be an omen.

For two subsequent issues, the literary journal known to millions as *TV Guide* featured bald men on their cover. And not just the Jeffrey Tambors of the cathode world, but *totally* bald men.

First, there was the cancer-ridden Robert Urich, followed in seven days by matinee idol Michael Jordan. Ken thought that the "rule of 3s" would come into play, but the next week's cover featured Lance Henriksen, who is just wrinkly.

TV GUIDE
Robert Urich
His Most Courageous Battle
The beloved star talks candidly about his illness, his family, and his hopes for a healthy future



Let the Game Begin...

Rather than wallow in self-pity or stave off nature's course, Ken and Rod have bravely decided to be given the hand that has been dealt. The big question is, though, who will lose it all first? Well, readers, we're going to find out, no matter how many years it takes us.

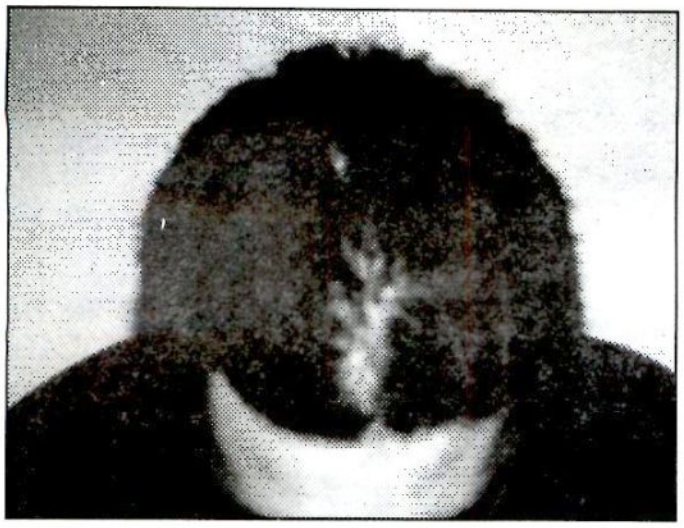
For this fascinating scientific study, Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Lott have graciously agreed to photograph their respective husbands' heads at the beginning of each month. Two photos will be taken – one of the front hairline, one aerial view – to ensure accuracy.

Being a full two years older than Rod, Ken looks to have the age factor sewn up in the race to become bald first, but let us not discount Rod's extreme genetic disadvantage. This blow of heredity virtually makes it an odds-on race.

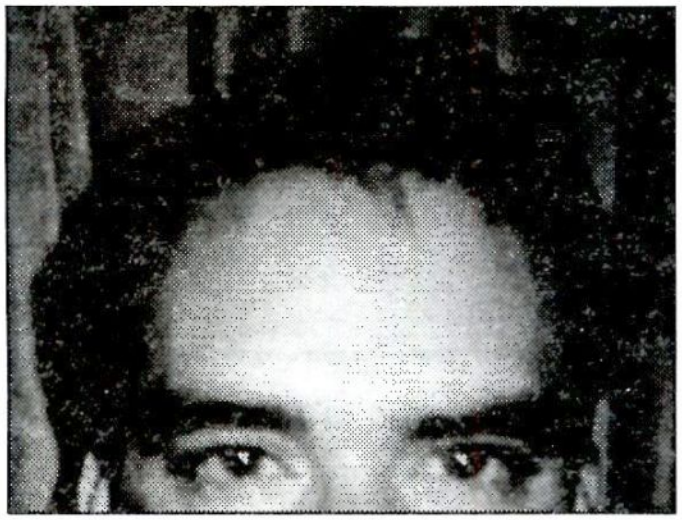
Beginning with this very issue of **HITCH**, we are proud to chart the men's progress. But that's not all: You are asked to vote on who you think is winning at any given time in the race.

You may cast your ballot via e-mail at *RLott@aol.com* or interactively at the official **HITCH** Hair Prix web site, located at *www2.southwind.net/~kend/bald.html*. You are encouraged to vote with every update, but no stuffing the ballot box – the server will note any offenders!

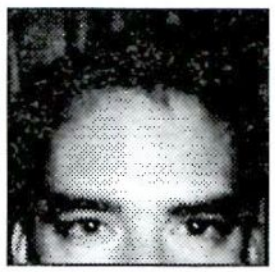
May the game begin. The more you lose, the more you win.



Rod displays his peninsula (upper) and northernmost ice cap.



Ken shows off his ever-increasing forehead (upper) and landing pad.



THE PLAYERS	Ken Davis	Rod Lott
Current Age	28	25
Hair Color	Dark brown	Black as ink
Manageability of Hair	Dry as a bone	Unruly
Number of Bald Immediate Relatives	0	6
Are Both Brothers Showing Signs?	No	Yes, but in denial
Number of Times a Week Hair Is Washed	6	At least 7
Brand of Shampoo Used	Suave® Strawberry	Revlon Flex®
Frequency of Haircut	Once a month	Every 4 - 6 *weeks*
Comb or Brush?	Brush	Brush
Number of Times a Week Ball Cap Is Worn	1	Maybe once
Night Kerchief Worn?	No	Hell, no
Number of Times in Life Have Had Head Lice	0	2

A Special **HITCH** Yank-It-Out Supplement

The HITCH

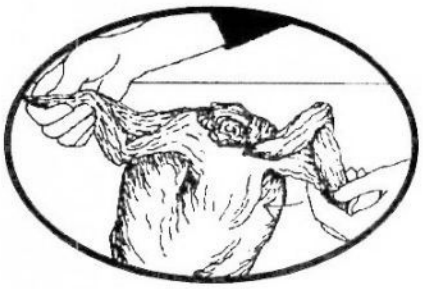
Cookbook & Kitchen Companion

22

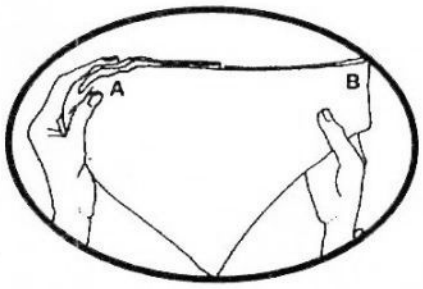
ARTERY-CLOGGIN', COLON-CLEANIN' RECIPES FROM

9

WOULD-BE CHEFS WITH NAMES LIKE DIXIE AND DORIS!

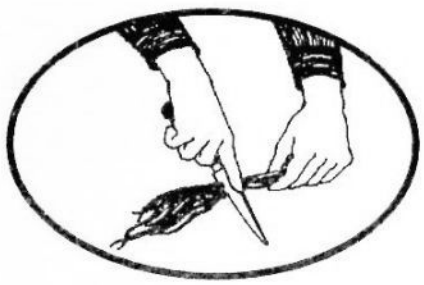


Chicken S&M!



Fun with NAPKINS!

Using the WHOLE HOG!



SQUID Cleaning Tips!

HITCH

LET STAND 5 MINUTES BEFORE SERVING

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IN THE HITCH

COOKBOOK & KITCHEN COMPANION

"An' I hay-elped!"
—Dumb girl on Shake 'N' Bake commercial

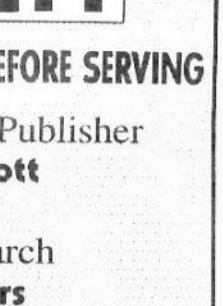
TEMPTIN' TREATS

Bass, baked..... **11**
Bread, cracklin'..... **7**
Bread, liquid sweet..... **11**
Breakfast casserole..... **5**
Brisket, Al's..... **8**
Brisket, Mom's..... **4**
Brownies..... **10**
Chocolate sheet cake..... **10**
Fruit pizza..... **4**
Groundhog..... **7**
Hog head cheese..... **7**
Ice cream, plain..... **3**
Ice cream, butter pecan..... **4**
Jell-O salad..... **9**
Lemon squares..... **10**
Meatballs..... **6**
Mushrooms, stuffed..... **9**
Potato casserole..... **5**
Sause..... **7**
Scrapple..... **7**
Spaghetti sauce..... **6**
Teriyaki chicken..... **3**

FIXINS & WHATNOT

Tying Up a Chicken/**5** • Folding an Elf Shoe Napkin/**6** • Folding a Hog's Head Napkin/**7** • Folding a Viking Hat Napkin/**8** • Right and Wrong Ways to Hold Knife and Fork/**9** • Cleaning That Squid/**11** • How Canned Fruit Reaches You/**12**

SOMEONE'S IN THE KITCHEN WITH THAT ROD GUY



I'd like to tell you – as is usually done with legit volumes packed with this sort of thing – that each and every recipe contained within *The* **HITCH** *Cookbook & Kitchen Companion* has been tested, tasted and retested for accuracy and quality.

Are you crazy? Like we have the time or skills.

But we're not trying to put one over on you. These are *real*, honest-to-God recipes. Seriously. Given our reputation, I can't blame you for thinking we may have altered the ingredients here and there *a la MacGyver* so that your stove would blow up upon preparation.

But we're not that clever. We are, however, hungry – and it is from this desire that this one-shot was born.

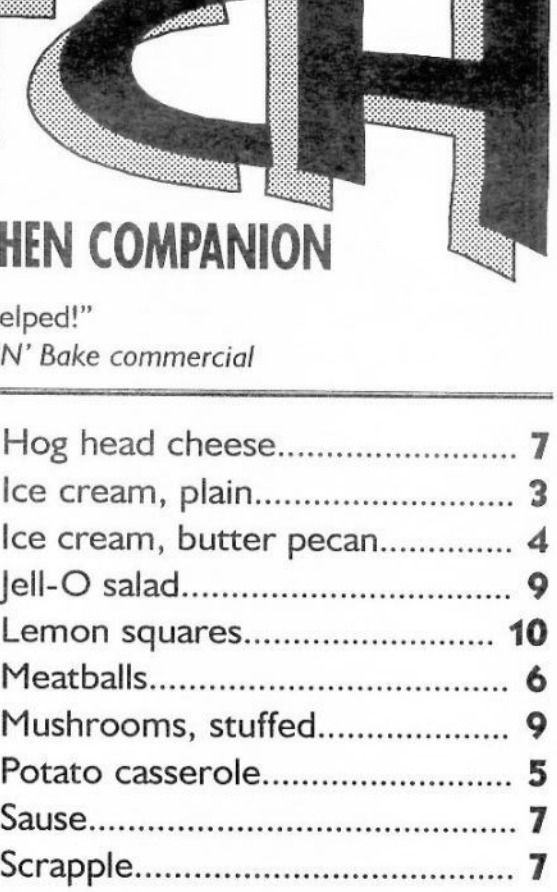
Getting strangers off the street to talk to you is very difficult. Even moreso getting them to open up about their culinary skills. Then imagine conning them into sharing secret recipes *and* getting their picture taken, usually in some stupid pose involving some dessert they just made.

Now you have an idea of what a special little piece of work this truly is...and why we're not likely to ever do it again.

✪ ✪ ✪

We also are doing it because we want your moms to like us. Several of our younger readers have expressed their frustrations in having to hide their copies of **HITCH** under the bed, because their maternal units have branded them contraband.

But maybe now – *just maybe* – they may reconsider, seeing as how this trim and slim section appeals to that which is good in all of us.



1. The right way to hold a spoon. 2. Three things are wrong here: the spoon is held in the fist, the right elbow is on the table, and the left hand is holding the dish. 3. Correct way to hold a cup. 4. This affected way of extending the fingers in handling spoon, fork, or cup is to be avoided.

At potluck dinners, Dottie's food goes first!

Although she has grown some 75 azaleas in her backyard and dotes over her four grandchildren, gardening and child-rearing sometimes take a backseat to Dottie's first love of cooking.

And no wonder! "No matter what she brings, wherever she brings it, her food always goes first," said Jeanene of her Baptist church, where Dottie serves on the hostess committee.

Describing herself as "retired and frustrated," Dottie is a member of her community garden club and is likely to put in time in her own kitchen baking bread and cooking casseroles.

"I love it," Dottie said. "I just enjoy other people saying they enjoy my food. Plus, we enjoy entertaining in our home and do quite a lot of it."

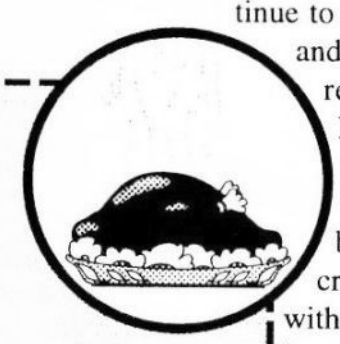
Dottie bakes sourdough bread twice a week, having been turned on to it by Dr. Dudley, who gave her her first starter.

"I bake cinnamon, white and wheat sourdough bread," she said. "In fact, I have some rising right now."

Among her other favorites are teriyaki chicken, roasts and rice casserole ("But it's not really a casserole," she admitted) and "all kinds of sweets." She would like to master Chinese food.

"Really, I like to cook a little bit of everything," she said.

Celebrated chef Dottie strokes linoleum.



"You might want to cut a breast open."

Homemade Ice Cream

"This is one of my favorites," Dottie *says. "It's certainly* my preacher's favorite."

1/2 gal. whole milk, scalded
1 can Eagle condensed milk
4 pints whipping cream
2 pints half-and-half
pinch of salt
4 cups sugar
6 eggs, separated
8 T. vanilla extract
1 tsp. lemon juice

Beat egg yolks. Add sugar and beat until light. Add condensed milk and continue to mix. Add milk (still hot) and mix until smooth. Add remaining ingredients. Lastly, add egg whites (beaten until stiff). Fold into mixture and let breathe in a six-quart ice cream freezer. Pack well with lots of ice cream salt and let stand for three hours.

Teriyaki Chicken

3-4 lbs. boneless chicken breast
marinate: 3/4 cup corn oil
1 1/4 cup light soy sauce
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. ginger
1/4 tsp. white pepper

Mix above marinate ingredients. Cover and refrigerate for one to two hours. Marinate chicken. Cook on grill, low heat, turning it several times. Cook for 20 minutes or until chicken is completely cooked.

"Don't overcook it!" Dottie stresses. "You might want to cut a breast open to see if it's done."

Home or overseas, Doris loves to cook!

With a kitchen this clean, it's hard to believe
Doris cooks briskets or anything else edible here!

Some of Doris' cooking expertise comes from the fact that she had no other choice.

For six and a half years, she and hubbie Sam lived in Norway, as part of Sam's work for a petroleum company. In Norway, they "didn't have mixes and prepared foods," Doris said. "They didn't even have fast food places. We had to make cakes from scratch and our own hamburgers and pizza and everything." Plus, in Norway, people smell.

Doris has been cooking for 45 years, no doubt the busiest of those spent cooking for her sons.

"I had two athletic, growing boys at one point who took a lot of food," Doris said. "You can say I've cooked a lot."

Doris' favorite dishes to cook are "brisket and all that type of thing." She also likes travel, sewing and flowers. She is a member of a Baptist church and of the Goodtimers Group, a social club that gets together for dinners and parties, which sounds boring.

She and Sam have five grandkids. And do they like Grandma's cooking?

"I think so," Doris said.

Butter Pecan Ice Cream

"This is the best ice cream you've ever tasted," promises Doris.

2 cups pecans, chopped
4 eggs
2 1/4 cups sugar
4 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
3 T butter
5 cups milk
4 cups heavy cream
1/2 tsp. salt

Saute pecans in butter and cool. Beat eggs, gradually adding sugar. Continue to beat until very stiff. Add remaining and mix. Pour into a one-gallon ice cream freezer and turn for about 15 minutes. Add nuts and continue freezing.

Fruit Pizza Dessert

Doris recommends fresh fruit, but frozen or canned can be used. "Strawberries and kiwi and bananas together is quite attractive," says Doris.

2/3 cup Oleo
3 T sugar
1 cup powdered sugar
1 cup flour
8 oz. cream cheese
2 cups whipped topping
fruit slices

Melt Oleo in saucepan, adding flour and sugar. Mix well. Press into an ungreased pizza pan. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Cool. Whip cream cheese, powdered sugar and whipped topping together. Spread on cooled crust. Drain fruit if necessary (canned) and spread on pizza. Refrigerate until serving time. Cut into pie-shaped wedges to serve.

Mom's Brisket

Doris suggests baking this in a roaster pan. For a large brisket, double the ingredients.

1 T liquid smoke
1 tsp. garlic salt
1 tsp. onion salt
1 tsp. celery salt
2 T Worestershire sauce
1 large onion, sliced

"Continue to beat until very stiff."

Mix together all ingredients except Worcestershire and onion. Rub mixture into meat. Wrap in heavy foil. Let sit overnight. Open foil and add sauce and onions. Rewrap and place in baking dish. Bake for 5 hours at 250°. Pour off liquid, skim fat and serve with meat.

Idella's a star in the kitchen, on the links!

As a cook, Idella is right on par.

But as she'd tell you, she feels a bit more at home on the golf course than in the kitchen. A golfer for 20 years, Idella plays as part of the Women's Golf Association. She was club champion for 13 out of 14 years, "but I'm a has-been now," she said.

"I am an outdoors person," Idella said, citing her love of not only golf, but gardening and walking. But when she's inside, she just might cook.

"I cook quite a bit, I'm afraid," she said. "I'm one of the few ladies who still does it. Let's just say I've been cooking for several years."

She admitted that at times, cooking gets to be tiring.

"After years of being a homemaker, you just have a hard time coming up with new ideas," she said.

Nevertheless, she loves to fix desserts and casseroles. She'd like to be able to bake sourdough bread, but doesn't have the patience. "I'd be thinking too much about golf!" she said.

Potato Casserole

"Some people even like to eat it cold," Idella says.

2 pkg. (8 oz.) frozen hash brown potatoes or tater tots
1/4 cup melted butter or oleo
1 1/2 cups grated American cheese
1/3 cup chopped onions
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 pt. sour cream
topping: 2 cups crushed Corn Flakes
1/2 cup melted oleo

Combine all ingredients except the topping in a large bowl and mix well. Pour into a large baking dish. Spread crushed flakes with melted butter on top. Bake at 350° for 45 to 50 minutes.

Day Before Breakfast

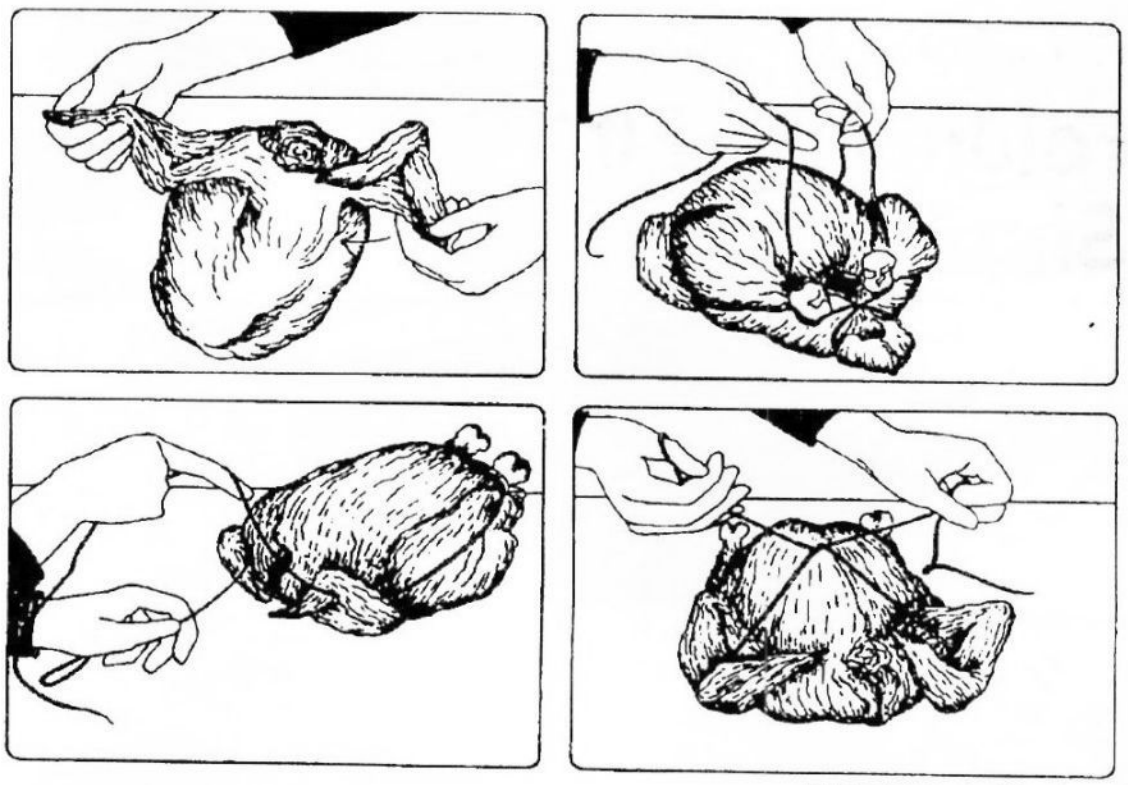
6 eggs, slightly beaten
4 cups cubed bread, crusts and all
1 cup sharp cheddar cheese
1 tsp. dry mustard (optional)
1 lb. sausage
2 cups milk

Cook sausage, crumble and drain well.

Mmm-mmm! Coconut oatmeal cookies!

Combine all ingredients; put into a well-greased 9" x 13" pan. Refrigerate overnight or for 12 hours. Cook at 350° for 35 to 40 minutes.

Tying Up a Chicken



Cooking for 1 1 0 is Dixie's cup o' tea!

When it comes to cooking, Dixie aims to please.

"I like it when people tell me the things I make are good," Dixie said. "It makes me feel good to know that I can do something to please somebody."

Once a week, Dixie cooks the Wednesday night fellowship meal for her Baptist church. Anywhere from 55 to 110 people attend, but that's just fine by Dixie, who enjoys ccoking for large groups anyway.

"My husband thinks I've quit cooking at home, because doing it for just two people is too hard anymore," she said. "I'd rather multiply a recipe than divide it."

Her favorite things to cook include burgers, onion rings and spaghetti. She also prepared foods grown in her husband's garden: tomatoes, green beans, garlic and spinach.

(Note: He's also growing peanuts this year.)

"I like to try new things and new recipes," she said. "The only thing I don't like to cook is fish, because I don't like seafood. You have to like something to want to cook it.

"Anything with chocolate I love."

Tee-hee!

Dixie's no chicken...but she just might fry you up some!

Meatballs

This recipe serves eight.

4 slices bread
1/2 cup water
2 eggs
1 lb. ground beef
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 T snipped parsley
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
crushed dash of pepper
2 T. olive oil

Soak bread in water for 2 to 3 minutes. Add eggs and mix well. Mix with ground beef, cheese, parsley, salt, oregano and pepper. Wetting hands, form meat mixture into small balls. Brown slowly in olive oil or place in 9" x 13" pan and brown in 350° oven for 25 minutes. Add meatballs to sauce, simmer, loosely covered for 30 minutes.

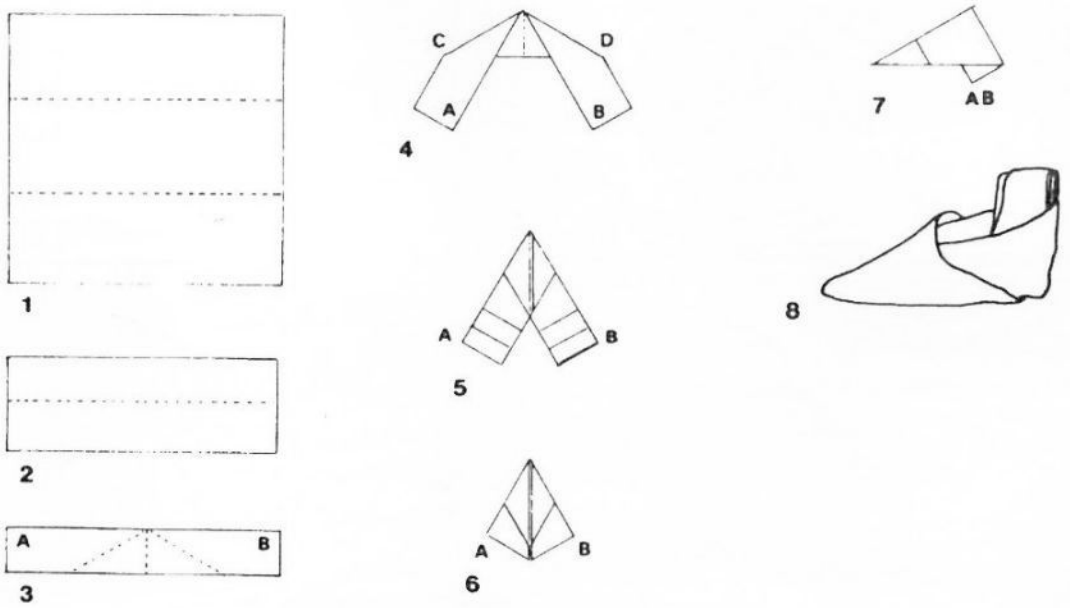
Spaghetti Sauce

3/4 cup chopped onion
garlic
3 T olive oil
2 cans tomatoes, 1 lb. each
2 cans tomato paste, 6 oz. each
1 1/2 cups water
1 tsp. sugar
1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1 bay leaf

Cook onion in olive oil until clear. Add rest of ingredients and simmer for 30 minutes. Add meatballs and simmer for an additional 30 minutes.

Folding an Elf Shoe Napkin

1. Lay flat. Fold in thirds along dotted lines.
2. *Fold in* half.
3. Fold corners A & B down.
4. Fold corners C & D to the center line.
5. Turn ends A & B up twice as indicated by the lines.
6. Fold in half on the center line. Turn corners A & B.
7. Tuck in corner AB.
8. Voila! Turn napkin over and set on table with toe pointing towards the diner!



Cookin' with the Ratlady

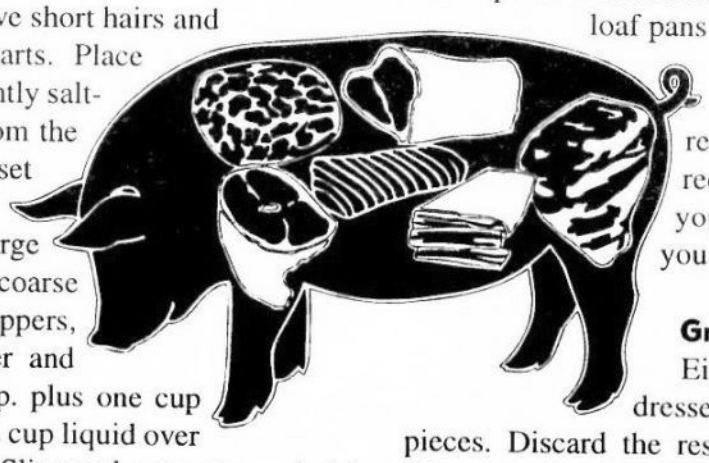
Last fall at the "An Affair of the Heart" craft show, I bought another cookbook from my friend Thelma from Altus, Okla. Thelma goes back a few years and always has interesting recipes from the past. Thelma was born, as was my daddy, in Palo Pinto, Texas, she about 30 years later.

Back in those days, people lived by the saying, "Use it up or wear it out, just don't waste it." Hog-killing time not only meant fresh bacon, ham, chops and sausage; it also meant using all of the hog.

For instance:

Hog Head Cheese

Scrape and clean the head. Remove short hairs and tongue. Remove all undesirable parts. Place tongue and head in a large pot of slightly salted water. Simmer until meat falls from the bones. Drain and strain liquids and set aside.



Chop three red peppers and one large onion, very fine. Run meat through a coarse blade of the food grinder. Mix peppers, onions and meat. Add black pepper and sage to taste. If desired, add two tsp. plus one cup vinegar. Press into loaf pans, pour 1/2 cup liquid over each loaf. Cool in icebox overnight. Slice and serve as sandwich meat.

The head has not been wasted; now for the feet:

Sause

Wash and scrape pigs feet. Cover with water in a large pot. Boil until the meat falls from the bones. Add two cups of liquid used to cook the meat. Pour into a loaf pan after seasoning to taste with salt, black pepper and vinegar. Allow to jell. Slice and serve.

Scrapple

Neck bones are broken into pieces and placed in a kettle with enough water to cover. Cook until meat falls from the bones. For each pint of meat, add three pints of boiling liquid, one pint cornmeal and another pint of water. Stir in kettle and let boil. Boiling mixture will pop and splatter. After it thickens, pour into two loaf pans. Chill overnight. Slice and dredge in flour. Place in skillet of hot lard. Serve with scrambled eggs.

Cracklin' Bread

Two cups cracklins (made from rendering lard), one tsp. salt, two cups cornmeal. Enough hot water to make stiff paste. Bake in loaf pans for 30 minutes at 400°.

It is not too late to make the above recipe from last fall's hog killing, but the next recipe from *Janette Oke Family Cookbook* I received from Patti for Christmas will help you know what to do with the groundhog you catch Feb. 2.

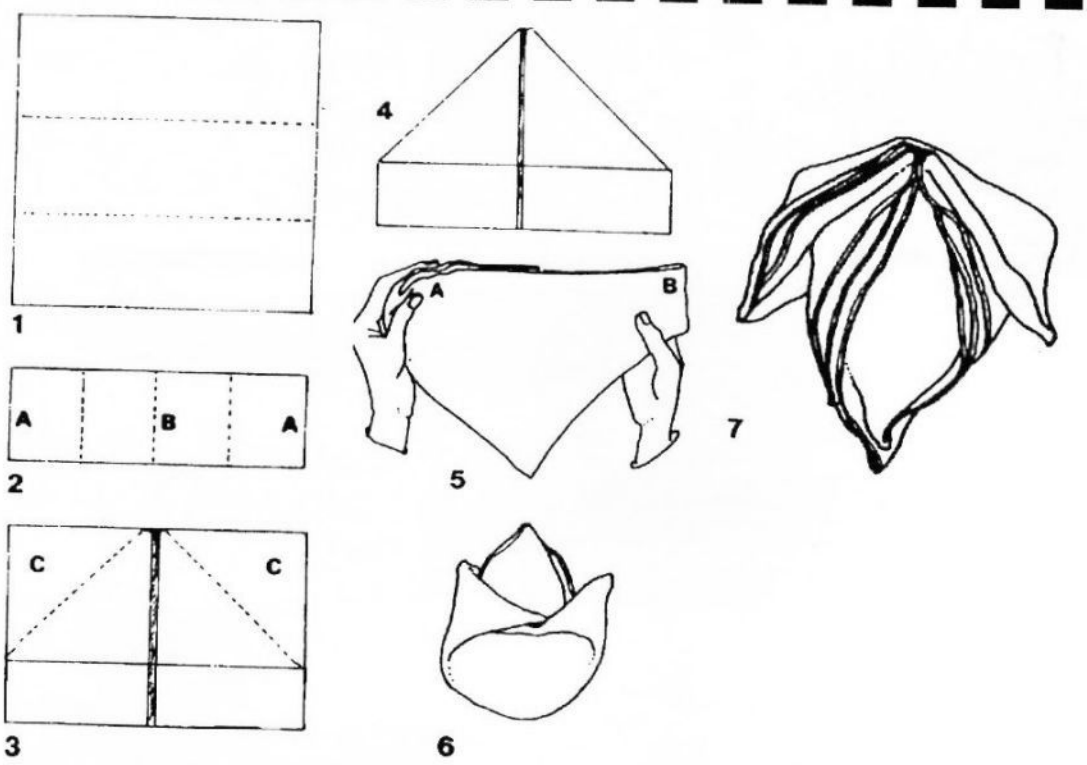
Groundhog

Eight- to 10-lb. groundhog, cleaned and dressed. Cut legs and back into serving-size pieces. Discard the rest. Soak meat overnight in salted water. Rinse carefully. Place in a kettle with one tsp. salt and one chopped onion. Cover with cold water and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat and simmer until tender. Drain. Dry with towel. Dredge with flour seasoned with salt and pepper and brown in four tablespoons hot oil and one cup butter. Makes eight to 10 servings.

I'll bet if Jesus had served these dishes to the multitudes, he would have had more than 12 baskets of leftovers.

Folding a Hog's Head Napkin

1. Fold the napkin into thirds.
2. Fold edges A to center line B.
3. Fold the triangles C to the center line.
4. How ya doin' so far? Look like this? Good!
5. Take the napkin in both hands. With the points toward you and the plain side on top, roll to form a cone. Tuck corner A into corner B.
6. Voila! Hog's head! Place on the table with the opening down and the points away from the diner.



Coach Al's brisket is a real champ!

When it comes to cooking, Al says, "I'm just an amateur."

Don't believe it. Or do. We don't care.

Just a few minutes later, Al said, "I don't mean to brag, but I've been told that my brisket is the best people have ever tasted."

Make up your damn mind, will ya?

Now retired from the world of high school coaching, Al enjoys cooking – mostly barbequing – for both friends and family, as well as for different events at his Southern Baptist church (most likely not dances).

Al coached and taught for 27 years, 18 of them as head football coach and six with basketball. Before that, he attended Tulsa University on a football scholarship. "I was a halfback. I wasn't always this big."

Al is quick to tell you about his coaching days, "We won the state championship in 1979," but boasts with equal pride, "I won our church's annual bake-off for three years in a row."

Al poses with a brisket the size of his liver.

Since retiring, Al has "*piddled around*" and taught defensive driving for the Oklahoma Safety Council. And then somewhere between the occasional round o' golf, coffee at a donut shop where old guys hang out and taking off to Lake Texoma, "as a hobby, I started cooking," he said, naming barbeque, brisket, ribs and sausage as his favorites, as well as "everything that goes along with it: slaw, potato salad, beans!"

He is also big on desserts, such as Italian cream cake or black forest torte.

He is also just plain big.

Al promised to bring me a brisket of my very own, and never did, so I'm not printing his recipe for pineapple crepe.

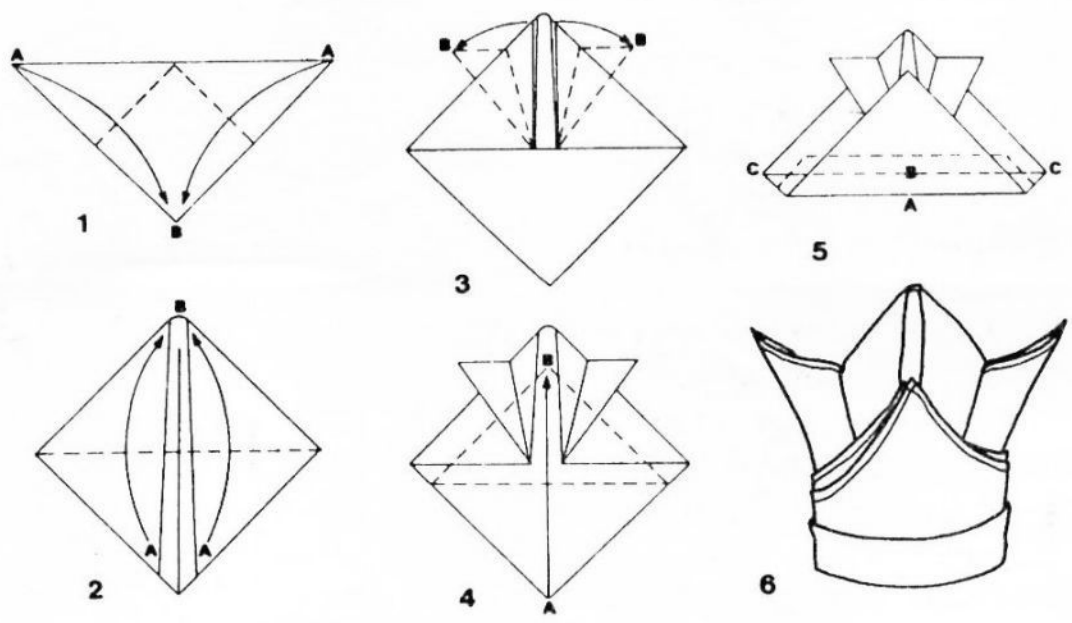
Brisket

8-10 lbs. brisket
vinegar
1 T barbeque spice
2 cups hot water

Trim seam fat, but not all of it. Bathe with vinegar. Handrub with dry spice. Put in barbequer away from direct heat and smoke at 250° for 3-4 hours. Wrap in foil and cook at 250° for 6-6 1/2 hours. Let cool naturally. Slice thin. Put in small pan. Take natural juices and mix with barbeque spice and water. Spoon over meat, cover and heat at 250° for however long until it is done.

Folding a Viking Hat Napkin

1. Fold the napkin in half diagonally, then fold corners A to B.
2. Fold two flaps marked A up to B.
3. Fold the two flaps marked A out to the dotted lines at B.
4. Fold A to B, taking careful steps that the fold falls along the bottom dotted line.
5. Fold the bottom edge A along the dotted line marked B, then tuck ends marked C around the back to make the napkin stand up.
6. Voila! Viking hat!



Melodie's specialty? Pies, pies, pies!

If she's not cutting hair, odds are that Melodie is in the kitchen trimming the fat.

The owner and operator of her own hair fashion studio, Melodie works long days Tuesdays through Fridays snipping on customers' heads, but finds time to cook three or four dinners a week.

"I've always enjoyed cooking," she said. "It's been a hobby of mine."

You could say it runs in the family. Her mother ran her own restaurant, Granny Fern's Kitchen, in Seminole. Despite the dumb name, she ran it for 25 years. Her husband Glen is also "good with deer and antelope meat."

Her favorite foods to prepare are desserts. She got that from her mother, too, whose space was limited in the restaurant and baked 25 to 30 pies from scratch in the home and transported them to work.

"Pies were Mother's specialty," she said.

She also enjoys cooking big holiday dinners and making salads, complete with her own dressings.

"Those are my favorite to make. I won't buy salad dressing!" she declared. "I never did get into bread, though. I'm not a bread maker. I don't have the feel for it. Either you have it or you don't, and I don't. I've made rolls that you could hammer pictures into the wall with."

I believe it.

Wonderful Orange Jell-O Salad

"This recipe is UUUMMMMMMMM-MM goood!" Melodie says. It serves 4-6.

1 small box orange Jell-O
1 can mandarin oranges
1 can crushed pineapple
topping: 3 oz. whipped cream cheese
3 tsp. powdered sugar

Melodie cuts a banana icebox pie. Oooh.

Drain and save juice of oranges and pineapple. Mix Jell-O with just under one cup boiling water. Use juices with a little lemon juice for second cup of water for Jell-O. After Jell-O starts to congeal, add fruit. On topping, add La Creme topping until a good consistency. Refrigerate.

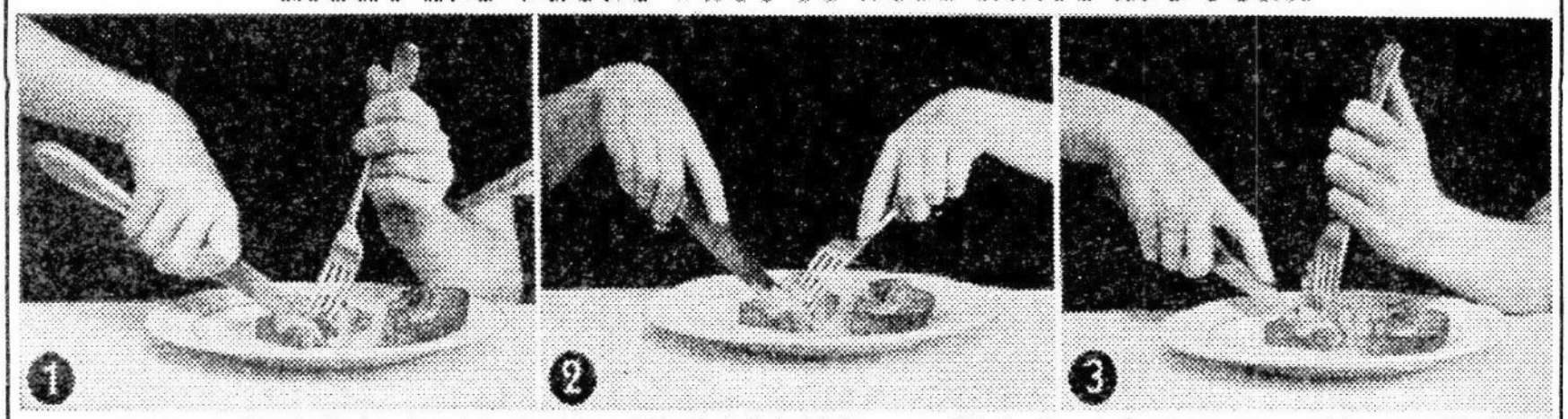
Stuffed Mushrooms

"These are wonderful!" Melodie says with sickening glee.

8 oz. cream cheese, at room temperature
1 lb. cheddar cheese, grated
3/4 small can Wilson real bacon bits
3 small green onions, minced real fine
cayenne pepper (to taste)
24 extra-large mushroom buttons (or 30-32 medium size)

Mix all ingredients together. Stuff mushroom buttons. Bake at 400° until cheese bubbles, about 10-12 minutes. Do not overcook.

RIGHT AND WRONG WAYS TO HOLD KNIFE AND FORK



1. This is wrong. The knife is gripped in the fist and the fork is held times up with the fingers in the wrong position. 2. The correct way. 3. Children often hold knife and fork this way before their fingers are strong enough for the correct method.

Kaaren's desserts take the cake...get it?

Kaaren displays her...well, I don't know what the hell it is.

Had Kaaren not improved her cooking skills considerably since her childhood, you would not see her name here.

When she was nine, she baked her first cake solo, a chocolate layer number for her parents' anniversary. The three-layer cake was only an inch high, instead of the expected six. After her parents quizzed Kaaren, she told then she just followed the directions, which read, "Separate the eggs."

And Kaaren had done just that, placing one egg on one side of the bowl and the other egg on the other side. (Readers: I apologize for that anecdote, one of a *Reader's Digest* level.)

Since then, Kaaren has learned, and can bake a cake with the best of 'em. In fact, pies and biscuits are her favorite dishes to cook. An avid cookbook collector, especially those published by the Junior League, she has been cooking since she was able to help her grammy bake cookies.

Today, her daughter Stacy calls her "the fastest cook in the world. She can have a full meal on the table in 15 minutes." Friends often request baked goods from her. As a diabetic, Kaaren can't enjoy eating all that she prepares, so she shares it with others at her office.

With all these fabulous desserts, what's her secret?

"I import flour from Knoxville, Tenn.," she said.

Well, whoop-de-freakin'-do.

Yum-Yum Brownies

2 cups granulated sugar
3/4 cup butter and butter-flavored Crisco 1/2 and 1/2
4 eggs, beaten
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup Hershey's European Chocolate

Cream together sugar and shortening. Add eggs, vanilla and nuts. Sift together flour, salt and cocoa and add to sugar mixture. Stir well. Bake in a greased jelly roll pan at 350° until dough shrinks away from edges of pan. Let cool before cutting.

Just About Everybody's Favorite Chocolate Sheet Cake

2 sticks margarine
1/2 cup water
4 T. cocoa
2 cups flour, sifted
2 eggs, beaten
1 tsp. soda
1 cup buttermilk
1/4 tsp. salt
frosting: 1 stick margarine
4 T. cocoa
6 T. milk
1 1-lb. pkg. powdered sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup nuts, chopped

Heat together margarine, water and cocoa, stirring constantly until margarine is melted. Pour over flour and sugar. Add eggs, soda, buttermilk and salt. Bake in greased jelly roll pan at 350° for 25 minutes. Frost while warm. To make icing, about 5 minutes before cake is done, melt margarine, cocoa and milk, stirring constantly. Pour mixture over powdered sugar, vanilla and nuts. Mix well and frost warm cake. (1 tsp. cinnamon may be added to cake, frosting or to both.)

Lemon Squares

crust: 1 stick margarine
1 cup flour, sifted
1/4 cup powdered sugar
topping: 1/2 fresh grated lemon rind
2 eggs, slightly beaten
2 T. lemon juice
1 cup sugar
2 T. flour
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/4 cup powdered sugar

Cream margarine, flour and powdered sugar. Pat mixture into an ungreased 8" x 8" pan. Bake for 15 minutes at 350°. Mix lemon rind with eggs, lemon juice, sugar, flour and baking powder. Put mixture on top of crust and bake for an additional 20-25 minutes at 350°. After baking, lightly dust with powdered sugar while still hot.

Try
LIGHTER
LEANER PORK
TONIGHT

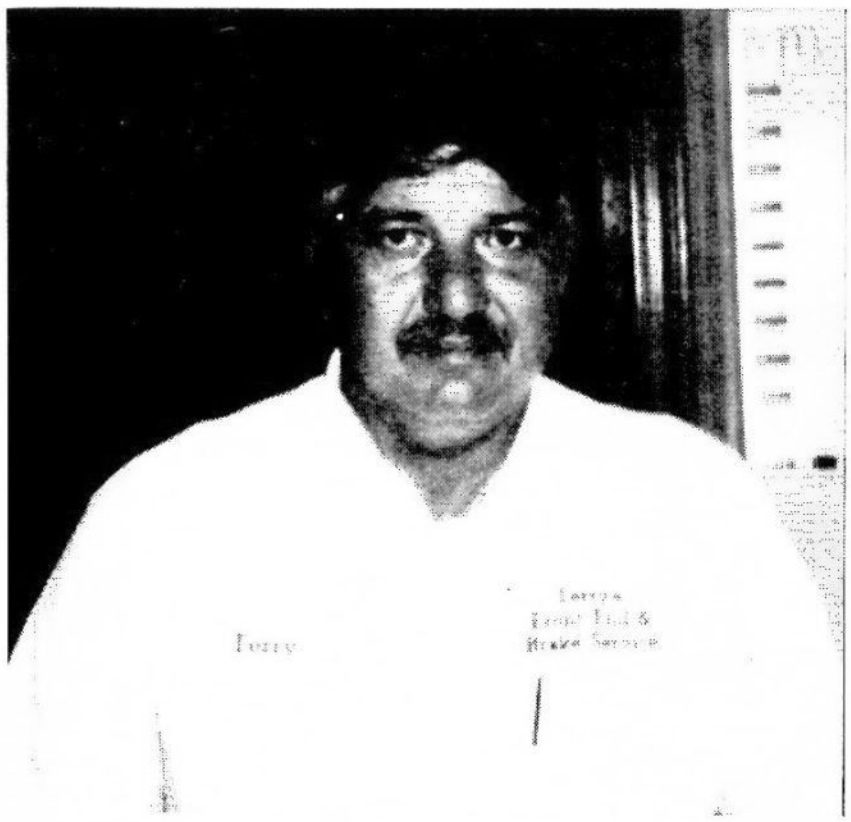
Terry enjoys the stench of fresh fish

For 19 years, Terry has owned and operated a front end alignment shop in the gross part of Oklahoma City.

But he'd rather be hunting and fishing.

"Oh, I'd say I fish about 125 days out of the year," Terry said. "And when I can't fish, I hunt. I raise bird dogs."

An avid outdoorsman, Terry enters fishing derbies (*Note:* Not as much fun as Activision's "Fishing Derby" game for the Atari, I'm sure) for cash prizes. In 1993, he won $1,000 in one such competiton. He was tied for the length of the game with a 15-year-old boy for the top prize, so the judges flipped a coin. Jones was one grand richer. The boy probably cried and cried.



Smile, dammit, you sweet bread-makin' fool!
You're in **HITCH**!

Terry's cooking skills came about as a result of not always having time to hunt 'n fish. On those nights when he couldn't pointlessly slaughter animals, he turned to pots and pans.

"I cook, *period*, but baked bass and liquid sweet bread are my two favorite things," he said.

The liquid sweet bread was, as they say, a sweet accident.

"I tried to learn to make homemade bread, but it never did come out right," Terry said. "So I came up with this liquid sweet bread. It's great. You don't even have to knead it. And you can tell Al that this bread would go *great* with his brisket. He was my football coach."

The baked bass recipe was created out of concern for health.

"You get tired of eating fried fish all the time, so I came up with this," he said. "I did it by trial and error...more errors than successes. I've always caught fish, but I decided sometimes you need to eat something a little more healthy than fried. You put carrots and potatoes on it and it's just delicious.

"And if you don't like fish, you can always just eat the carrots and potatoes."

Heh-heh.

Baked Bass

bass filets
1/2 cup water
2 cubes beef broth
Lawry's seasoned salt
potatoes, sliced
carrots, sliced
onions, sliced (optional)

Grease 9" x 13" Corningware dish. Cover bottom with filets. Use water and broth. Sprinkle fish with Lawry's. Cover fish with sliced potatoes and carrots. Also sprinkle vegetables with Lawry's. Bake covered at 350° for 45 minutes.

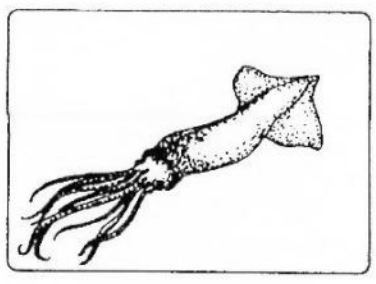
Liquid Sweet Bread

4 cups self-rising flour
1 egg
1 cup sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups milk

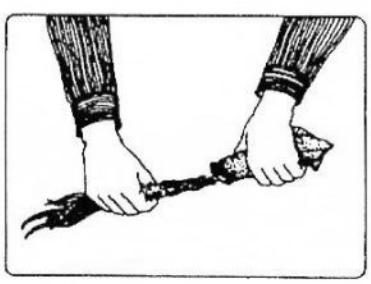
Mix ingredients well. Pour into greased bread pan. Fill pan 2/3 full. Bake at 350° until golden brown, approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Cleaning That Squid

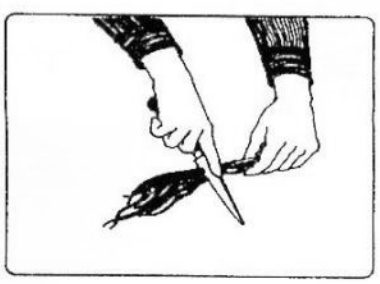
① This is a squid.



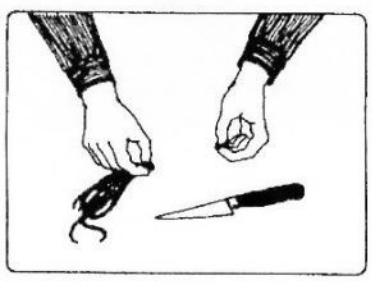
② Yank him in half.



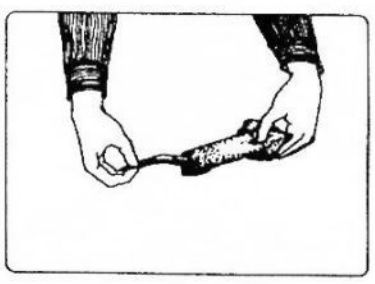
③ Slice off tentacles just above the eyes.



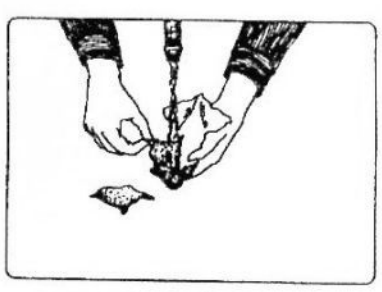
④ Squeeze out the nasty little knot.



⑤ Remove cartilage from the sac.

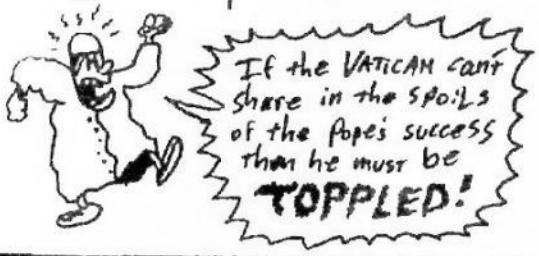


⑥ Peel off outer skin under water.



Merrell "Root" Hamer & Root Studio present the secret adventures of....

The POPE



Hopefully this dolt will act on this bogus info I'm feeding him and assault the Pope!
...And he also funds the Satanic one-world Government!
You don't say!? Thanks for the tip... I'll use this knowledge to stop the PATRIARCH...

Hi Mr. Smith, I'm Mr. Jones with Rose Hill. I would like to save YOUR FAMILY from dealing with this on the worst day of their life...
I'm not going to DIE right now...I don't need to take care of this now!
2 WEEKS LATER
Mr. Jones this is Mrs. Smith and my husband spoke with you a couple of weeks ago... he has JUST PASSED AWAY..
I'm so sorry... I only wish we could have saved you from the GRIEF, STRESS & FINANCIAL BURDEN ON THIS THE WORST DAY OF YOUR LIFE!
2 BURIAL SPACES
In our Beautiful
Garden Of Prayer / Shepherd
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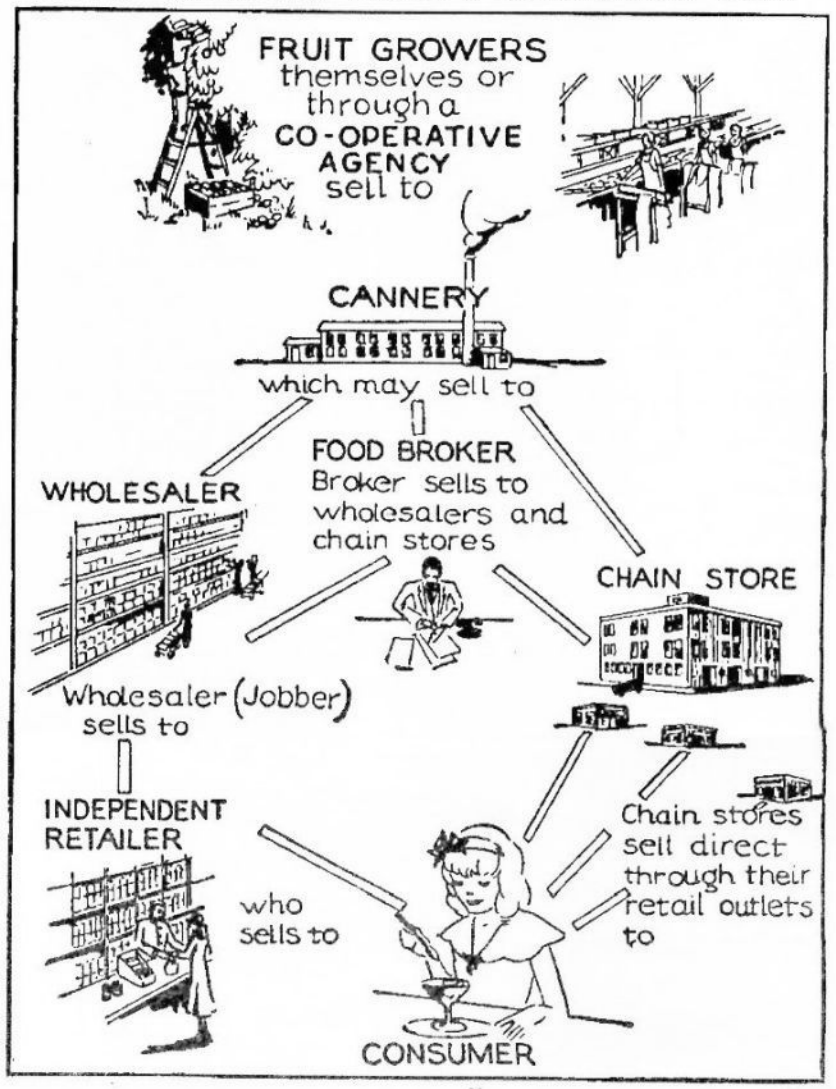
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which may sell to
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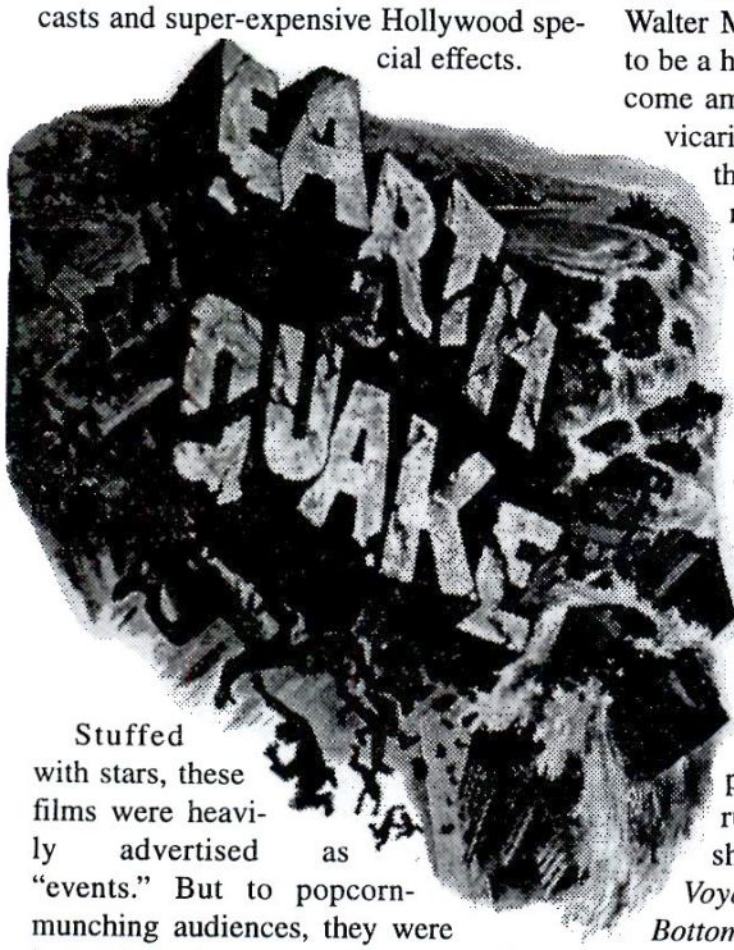
WHOLESALER
CHAIN STORE
Wholesaler (Jobber) sells to
INDEPENDENT RETAILER
who sells to
Chain stores sell direct through their retail outlets to
CONSUMER

Destructoramal

Disaster Films of the '70s

By Mike Accomando

Like Corn Flakes and milk, the 1970s and the disaster movie genre go hand in hand. Of all the genres that the decade spawned (kung-fu, women in prison, blaxploitation), this was one the independent studios couldn't compete with due to "all-star" casts and super-expensive Hollywood special effects.



Stuffed with stars, these films were heavily advertised as "events." But to popcorn-munching audiences, they were just enjoyable comic-book movies. Take a sturdy hero (someone we could look up to, like a Charlton Heston, a Steve McQueen or a Gene Hackman) with human weaknesses (very important) and surround him with a who's who of recognizable actors. Then hit 'em hard with a natural catastrophe. The disaster was usually caused by:

a) neglect or greed – example: faulty wiring causes a skyscraper to flame up in *The Towering Inferno*, or

b) Mother Nature – example: tidal waves, earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes, et al.

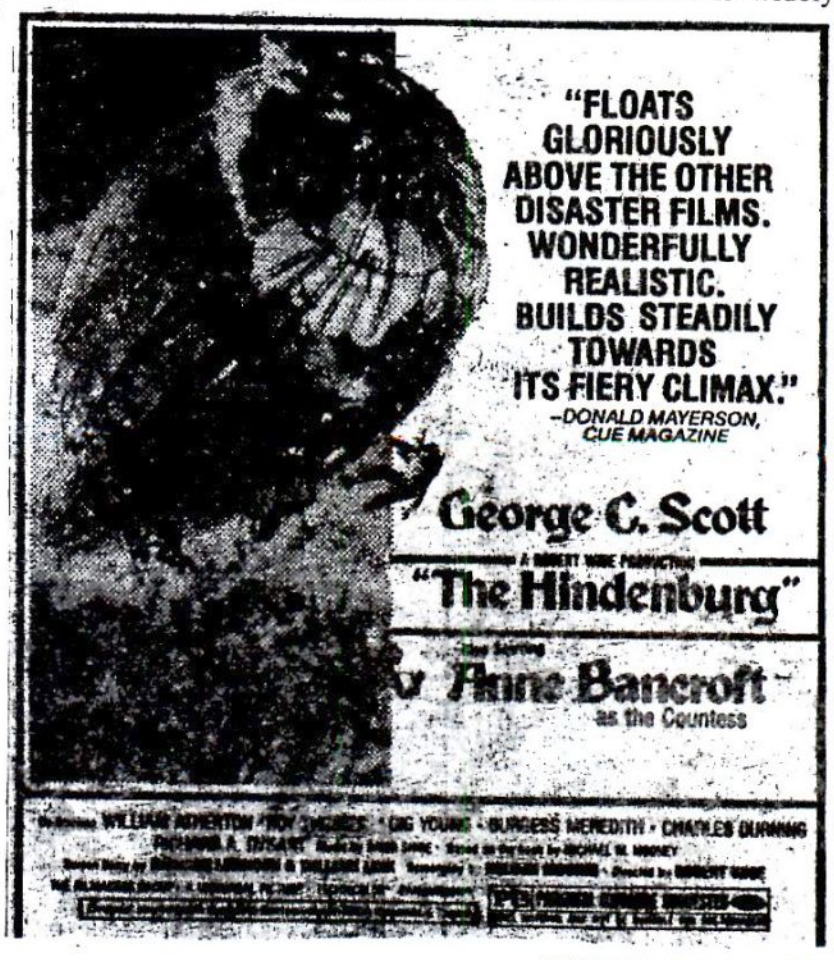
Finally, top all the heroism and cowardice off with state-of-the-art FX.

The disaster movie genre started with 1970's *Airport* and fittingly ended a decade later with its spoof, 1980's *Airplane!* In between saw many a disaster film, as moviegoers flocked in droves to see these pics. What was the appeal? The Walter Mitty syndrome – everyone wants to be a hero. To see an ordinary man overcome amazing odds, audiences could live vicariously through these heroes. Also, the films were akin to the Saturday morning cliffhangers of the '40s and '50s, delivering their share of matinee thrills. Plus, we wanted to see which principal cast members would be drowned, burned, buried under rubble or otherwise mutilated. Finally, and no different from today, we wanted to be dazzled by big-budget visuals.

The Master of Disaster, of course, was Irwin Allen. Creator of popular, long-running TV shows like *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *Lost in Space* and *Land of the Giants*, this producer/director virtually invented the genre single-handedly with its two greatest achievements: *The Towering Inferno* and *The Poseidon Adventure*. Allen's main competition was producer Jennings Lang, who released *Airport '75*, *Earthquake*, and *The Hindenburg*, among others.

Directed by George Seaton (*Miracle on 34th Street*), *Airport* is more of an old-fashioned Hollywood soap opera than a full-blown disaster flick, detailing what goes on behind the scenes of a sprawling modern airport. Although a bomb explodes on the plane, it's not the sole focus of the flick. The large cast includes Burt Lancaster, Jean Seberg, Helen Hayes, Jacqueline Bisset as a pregnant stewardess and George Kennedy, who's in all four *Airport* films. Dean Martin played the pilot, and with his drunken image, he's about the last person you'd want behind *any* wheel. *Airport* was basically a remake of two films: *The High and the Mighty* (1954) and *Zero Hour* (1957).

It wasn't until *The Poseidon Adventure* hit in 1972 that the *Airport* series became the total disaster-minded flicks we remember them to be. And *Poseidon* is widely


"FLOATS GLORIOUSLY ABOVE THE OTHER DISASTER FILMS. WONDERFULLY REALISTIC. BUILDS STEADILY TOWARDS ITS FIERY CLIMAX."
–DONALD MAYERSON, CUE MAGAZINE
George C. Scott
"The Hindenburg"
Anne Bancroft
as the Countess

regarded as the king of all disaster films. Produced by Allen and directed by Ronald Neame (who later helmed *Meteor*), *Poseidon* has a 90-foot tidal wave flip-flop an ocean liner and lets its band of survivors endure a deadly obstacle course to the top (or bottom?) of the ship. The cast featured Gene Hackman as a priest/sacrificial lamb, Shelley Winters, Stella Stevens and Carol Lynley, and the film won an Oscar for its effects.

ATTENTION!
This motion picture will be shown
in the startling new multi-dimension of
SENSURROUND
Please be aware that you will feel as well as see and hear
realistic effects such as might be experienced in an actual earthquake.
The management assumes no responsibility for the
physical or emotional reactions of the individnal viewer.

Seven years later, Allen himself directed *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure*, easily one of the worst sequels ever made. Its plot had Michael Caine, Sally Field, Telly Savalas and Slim Pickens trying to loot the sunken ship of the first movie. Naturally, the film quickly capsized at the box office.

Next up was *The Towering Inferno* (1972), marking the first time two major studios (Warner Bros. and 20th Century Fox) joined as partners to make a movie – the only reason being each owned rights to similar novels about skyscrapers on fire. Allen handled the impressive action scenes while John Guillermin (1976's *King Kong*) handled the drama. The film paired Paul Newman and Steve McQueen, and also featured William Holden, Faye Dunaway, Susan Blakely, Robert Vaughn, Fred Astaire and O.J. Simpson. The total tab came to $15 million, which wouldn't pay for a romantic comedy these days. Character development was nil, but what do you expect when the newspaper ads showed the actors' faces in little boxes with tags like "The Wife," "The Son-in-Law," "The Senator," "The Con Man," etc.? After this film exploded at the box office, disaster pics spread like a five-alarm fire.

The next biggie was 1974's *Earthquake*. To ensure audiences shook, rattled and rolled, the film was released in "Sensurround," a low-frequency sound system that simulated the effects of real-life earth tremors. The ads promised it would "thrust the moviegoer into the epicenter of the cataclysmic earthquake!" Actually, the noisy gimmick was just an ingenious ploy to keep audiences awake. The cast included Charlton Heston, Ava Gardner, George Kennedy, Lorne Greene, Victoria Principal, Richard Roundtree and Marjoe Gortner as a psychotic grocery store manager. Walter Matthau even has a cameo as a drunk, but is listed in the credits as Walter Matuschanskayasky!

The year 1974 also saw the rebirth of the jetliner disaster genre with the release of *Airport '75*, in which a 747 is struck by a small plane, sucking out the crew. Cross-eyed stewardess Karen Black takes command until Charlton Heston is ridiculously air-lifted onboard! Packed with TV actors you're rooting will die horribly, the sequel features Helen Reddy as a singing nun and Linda Blair as a nauseating teen awaiting a kidney transplant!

The film was so popular that two more sequels followed: *Airport '77* (with Jack Lemmon, Jimmy Stewart and Christopher Lee) and *The Concorde: Airport '79*, which once again dusted off George Kennedy and the all-star idiocy, including Susan Blakely, Jimmy Walker, Sylvia Kristel, Martha Raye, Charo and John Davidson. Leonard Maltin wrote of the film, "When the plane turns upside-down, Davidson's hair stays in place!"

Even George C. Scott couldn't make *The Hindenburg* float when it hit screens in 1975. Robert Wise's saga of the doomed Nazi blimp clocked in at a dull 125 minutes. Scott played a "good" Nazi to Anne Bancroft's pot-smoking countess. A couple is heard to say, "Next time, let's take the Titanic!"

The same year, Roger Corman took a Japanese film called *The Submersion of Japan*, threw out everything but the special effects, reshot footage, added Lorne Greene and released the result as *Tidal Wave*. Co-starring with Greene was *Street Master* Sonny Chiba.

In 1976, a screwball farce of disaster pics called *The Big Bus* was released. Directed by James Frawley (*Fraternity Vacation*), it left no cliché untouched. Joseph Bologna leads the cast as a down-and-out bus driver accused of eating 110 passengers after his bus crashes in the mountains. He denies it. "I ate the seats! I boiled the floormats like they taught us to!" he insists. His big comeback is driving the futuristic, nuclear-powered Superbus, which houses José Ferrer in an iron lung. With Mary Wilcox along for the ride as a stewardess, the film is much funnier than *Drive-In*, released the same year, which concerns teenagers at a Texas drive-in showing a campy spoof of disaster flicks.

By the end of the '70s, the genre had blown itself up. Failing to grab audiences were:

- *Gray Lady Down* (1978)
- *Avalanche* (1978)
- *Hurricane* (1979)
- *Meteor* (1979)
- *When Time Ran Out* (1980)

In 1978, Irwin Allen's bee-attack movie *The Swarm* was marketed as a disaster film, but it truly belongs in the "ecology gone berserk" category, alongside films like 1972's *Frogs*, 1977's *Kingdom of the Spiders* and 1975's *Bug*.

Respectable spectacles like *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* helped close the door on disaster films for good (interestingly, Steven Spielberg, responsible for *Close Encounters* helped revive the genre this summer with *Twister*). Major studios could no longer afford the door-to-door all-star casts due to escalating salaries, so they lumped all their money into mega-effects-laden space operas and action films.

Every cycle must run its course, and so moviegoers bid good-bye to the disaster film genre as the '80s began and borne the next craze: the slasher film. **H**

It Ain't Over 'Til the Fat Lady Drowns

Think disaster films are a thing of the past? Think again. Thanks to the summer movie season of 1996, which saw *Independence Day* (disaster via end-of-the-world) and *Twister* (disaster via tornadoes) emerge as among its two biggest hits – with each sucking in upwards of $200 million apiece – the disaster movie genre is alive and well. Because Hollywood gives more of what people go to see, prepare to be deluged.

In the weather-gone-amok category, Christian Slater and Morgan Freeman are filming *Flood*, while action ace James Cameron is prepping *Titanic* for a summer release.

Universal and 20th Century Fox are preparing to duel it out with two flowing lava movies: *Volcano* with Tommy Lee Jones and *Dante's Peak* with Pierce Brosnan.

Sylvester Stallone can be seen currently in *Daylight*, as can Ray Liotta in the air thriller *Turbulence*.

The webs have already caught on, with NBC rushing the virus-on-a-plane thriller *Pandora's Clock* to a fall ratings windfall. CBS soon followed with its own *Titanic* miniseries. *Asteroid* is due in February.

Lastly, Bill Pullman is in talks with his *ID4* bosses to star in something called *Supertanker*. Considering the idea for the film is Pullman's own, it could be the biggest disaster of all. —*Rod Lott*

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HELL, UPSIDE DOWN

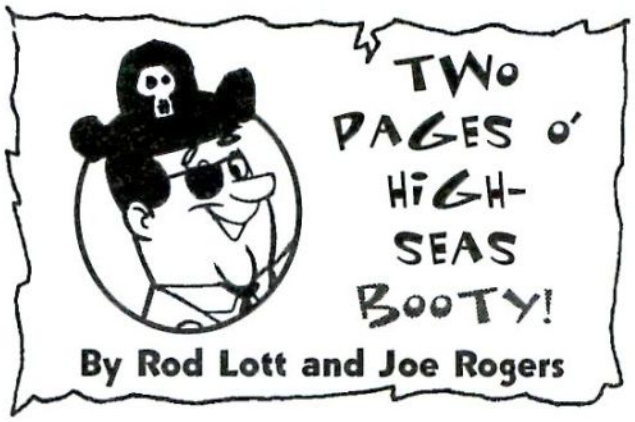
IRWIN ALLEN'S production of

THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE

Combining the Talents of 15 Academy Award Winners

20th Century-Fox presents "THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE" starring GENE HACKMAN · ERNEST BORGNINE · RED BUTTONS CAROL LYNLEY · RODDY McDOWALL · STELLA STEVENS · SHELLEY WINTERS · co-starring JACK ALBERTSON PAMELA SUE MARTIN · ARTHUR O'CONNELL · ERIC SHEA and LESLIE NIELSEN as The Captain · a RONALD NEAME film produced by IRWIN ALLEN · directed by RONALD NEAME · screenplay by STIRLING SILLIPHANT and WENDELL MAYES

THE PIRATE PAGES



got scurvy?

Ahoy there, ye mates! Bein' a nefarious pirate o' the high seas ain't all fun 'n games. Sure, there's plenty of killin' and rapin', but sometimes the fun gets to you and you come down with something awful that'll make ya be pukin' yer guts out overboard.

Could it be a rascally case o' scurvy? Take this quiz and diagnose yeself!

1. Which of the following do you have?
- a. Sore gums
- b. Growling stomach
- c. Itchy feet

2. Have you noticed any of the following?
- a. Red skin blotches
- b. Dirt on shirt
- c. Lost your sea legs

3. When you wake up, how do you feel?
- a. Poor
- b. Hungry
- c. Edgy

SCORING

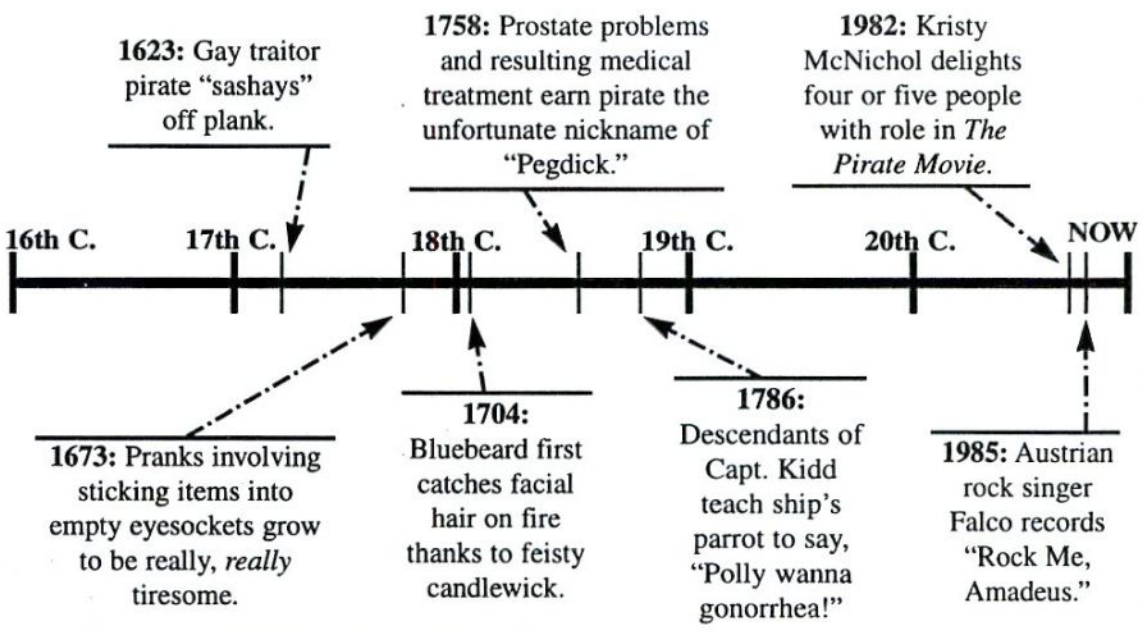
mostly c — You're just frustrated, young pirate!

mostly b — You're hungry! Eat some ship biscuits!

mostly a — You're a sickly pirate! Suck on oranges and stick leeches on your chest.

Your Own Pirate Coins

Great Moments in Pirate History


16th C.
17th C.
18th C.
19th C.
20th C.
NOW
1623: Gay traitor pirate "sashays" off plank.
1758: Prostate problems and resulting medical treatment earn pirate the unfortunate nickname of "Pegdick."
1982: Kristy McNichol delights four or five people with role in The Pirate Movie.
1673: Pranks involving sticking items into empty eyesockets grow to be really, really tiresome.
1704: Bluebeard first catches facial hair on fire thanks to feisty candlewick.
1786: Descendants of Capt. Kidd teach ship's parrot to say, "Polly wanna gonorrhea!"
1985: Austrian rock singer Falco records "Rock Me, Amadeus."

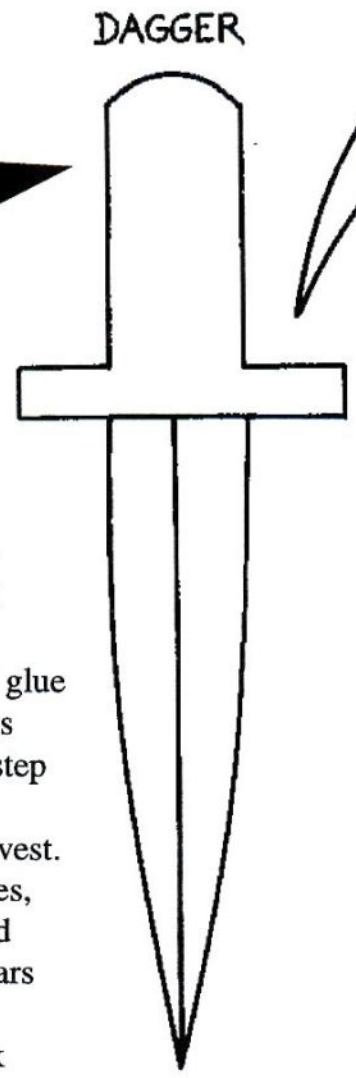
THE LANGUAGE OF PIRATE FLAGS

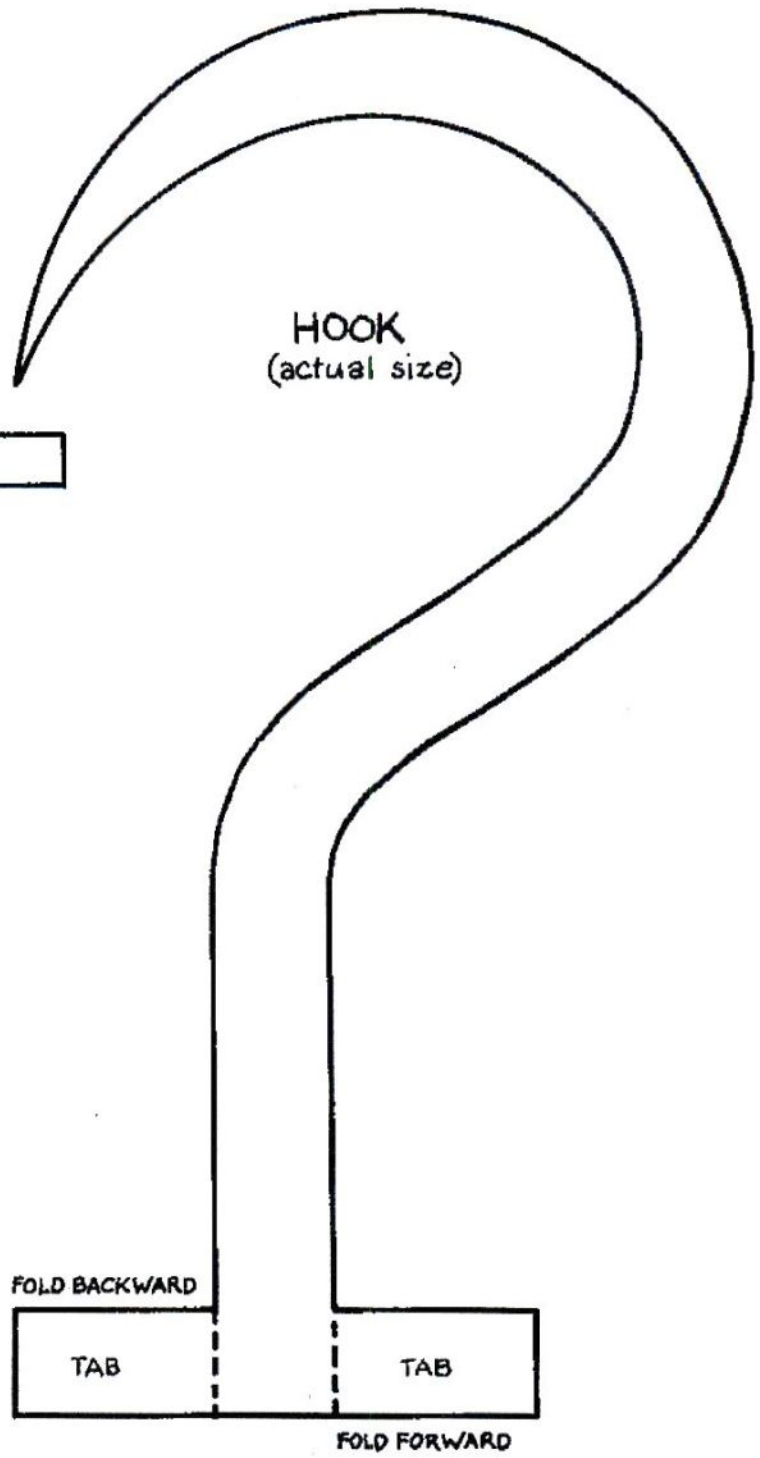
Here's all you need to look like and become a real, live pirate, kids!

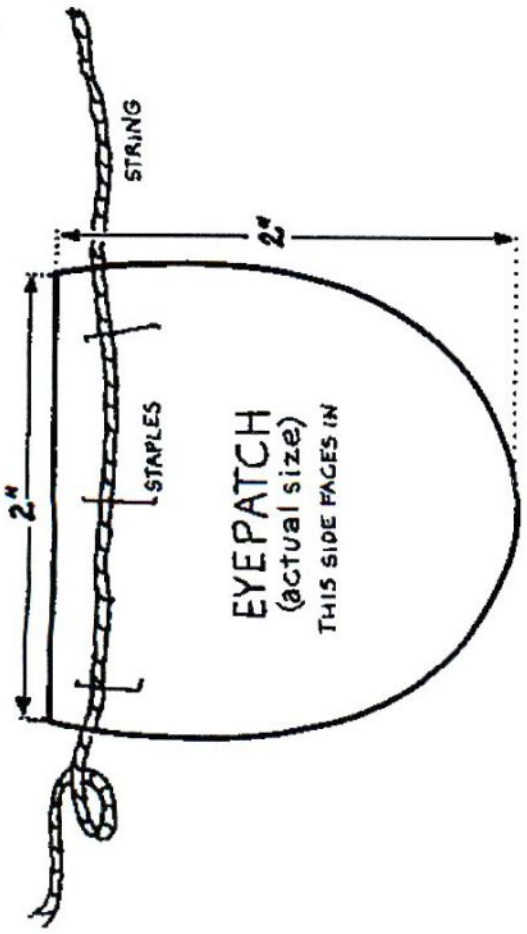
1) Cut out the hook and dagger and glue them to cardboard. Or, for better results with parents and enemies, forego this step and locate a real hook and/or dagger.

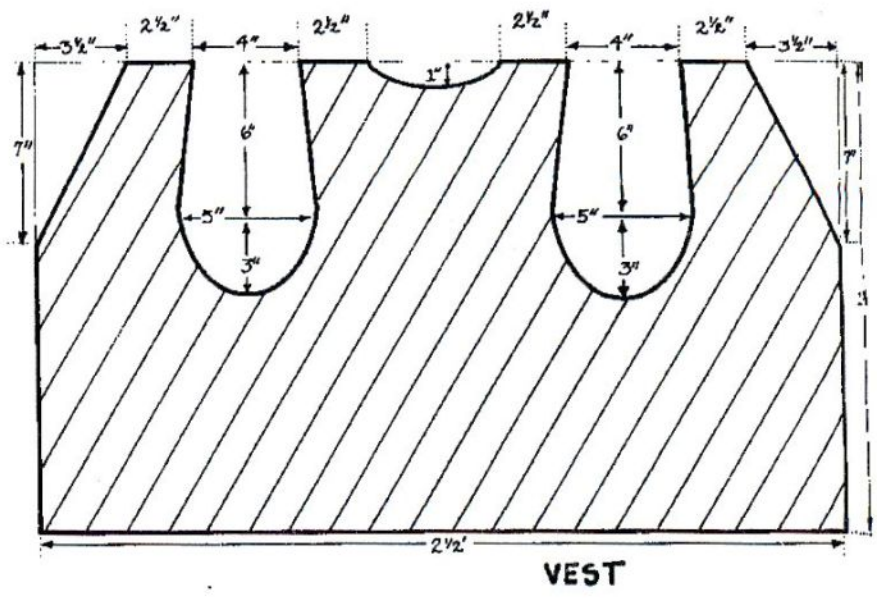
2) Follow the pattern to make your vest. Of course, sewing is for girls and sissies, so make your mom do it. The hook and dagger will come in handy if she appears reluctant.

3) The eyepatch will make you look brodding. Had Sammy Davis Jr. worn one, he coulda kicked Sinatra's ass left and right.









I Choose the Fonz

An essay by Ken Davis

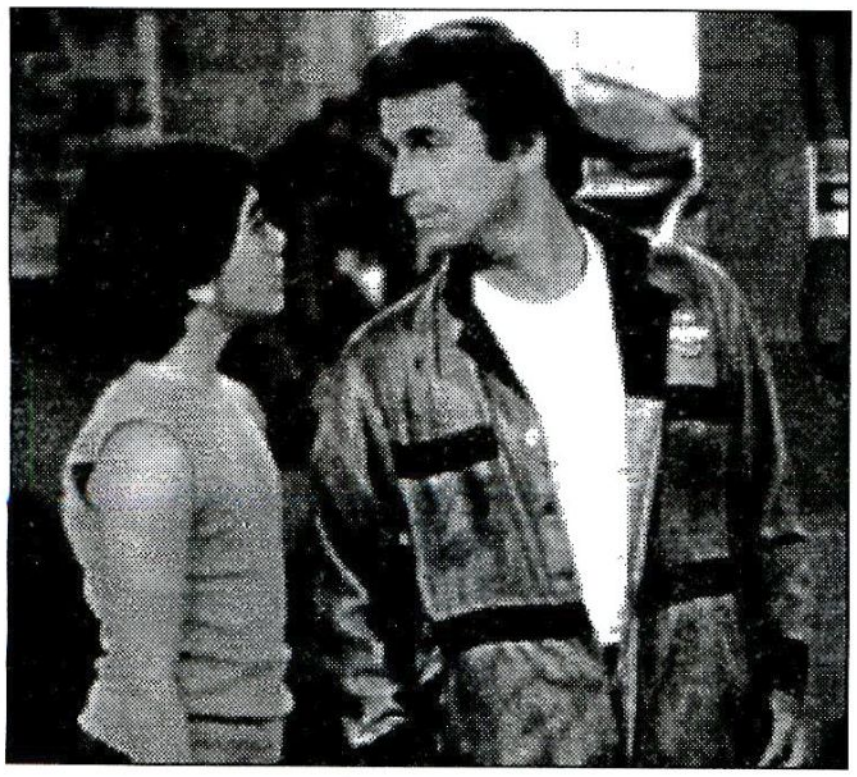
I recently pondered the following question: "In the history of mankind, who was the coolest person to ever walk the face of the planet?" I first thought, as all good little boys do, of dear old dad. But after giving it some thought, I came to the conclusion that guys that are truly cool have a lot of sex, but never seem to get the girls pregnant. My dad, and I'm only assuming here, doesn't have a lot of sex. And since I exist, that blows the second part of the coolness criteria.

Then I decided that perhaps the coolest person ever was James Dean, but he died when he was only 24 years old, and that's not very cool. I also considered many people who thought they were cool but really weren't, like Chuck Marolf, a guy I knew in high school. He was a dumb jock and wrote about sports in his "Marolf's Mumblings" column in the school newspaper.

On a school trip to New York City, my friend and I had to share a hotel room with him. We got into a fight with him one night because we wanted to watch the original *Little Shop of Horrors* on cable, whereas he wanted to watch wrestling. Little did he know that his affinity for watching fat guys pretending to beat each other up would one day cost him the "Ken Davis' Coolest Guy To Ever Walk The Planet" award. (He also let a prostitute into the room to chat, which had coolness potential written all over it, were she not a total skank.)

So instead, I bestow the award to one Arthur Fonzarelli – or, "Fonzie" – of *Happy Days* fame.

In recognizing "The Fonz" as the coolest guy to ever live, it is important to look not only at his reactions to the times in which he lived, but also to predict what he would be like in the world of today and to try to learn from him. It would be unrealistic for any of us to believe that we, too, can make a jukebox play our favorite song just by banging it really hard, or make a girl squeal just by banging it really hard. We could all learn a thing or two from this man in leather. As you walk this world on your quest to be cool, do as Fonzie would do.



The cool-as-an-igloo Fonz stares down the seriously not-at-all-cool Chacci.

Placing your order at a fast food joint presents one of the toughest situations in which to be cool. While at Wendy's, it's okay to order "combo meal number seven," but *never* agree to making it a "Biggie" size.

Similarly, never order a "Choco Taco" from Taco Bell, "Happy Meals" (even for a small child) from McDonald's or a "Pizza Treatza" from Dairy Queen. In fact, avoid Dairy Queen altogether, if possible.

Buying candy also proves risky. I can't think of one sugary treat that Fonzie would want to be seen eating. Consider this list of popular candies: Boston Baked Beans, Twizzlers, Twix, Jujyfruits, Gummi Bears, Raisinettes, Milk Duds, Whoppers, Nutrageous, et al. Cool? I think not.

When going to a concert, leave the lighter at home. To hold a lighter with an extended arm during a slow song is deemed inappropriate for a cool stud like you. Anyone who participates in this sad ritual is probably susceptible to showing emotions that are unbecoming of cool dudes. When the beach ball starts making its way through the crowd, be prepared. Do not attempt to help others keep the ball bouncing around. Instead, pop the ball with a sharp tack or pin. It's okay to enjoy the music, but under no circumstances are you to "groove to the beat." Coolness does not require one to dance, because no one on the planet can maintain coolness while doing a jig.

While at a sporting event, a baseball or hockey puck often leaves the playing area and heads into the stands. Fans wildly fight for these precious souvenirs. Not you, my friend, for you are cool. Instead, save your dignity and remain seated. Another big no-no is joining in to do "The Wave" or any other activity that requires *en masse* participation.

You shouldn't dance to the Village People's "YMCA," nor should you do the "Macarena." When the announcer asks "Are you ready to rumble?" your response should be, "Hell, no, I am cool and, therefore, opt not to 'rumble,' as you so call it."

Shopping can present its own set of obstacles to coolness. It's okay to go to the mall if you follow these simple rules. Don't go into any store that sells clothes or kitchen knick-knacks.

Cool: Tinder Box, Musicland, Camelot Music.

Uncool: Things Remembered, Victoria's Secret, Hallmark, Function Junction, Foot Locker.

This article is in no way meant to be all-inclusive, but instead gives some general principles to follow if you want to be cool. There are, of course, many more issues that I could discuss, but I don't want anyone to catch me writing because everyone knows that writers are probably the biggest nerds to roam the planet. **H**

Tenda Loving Care

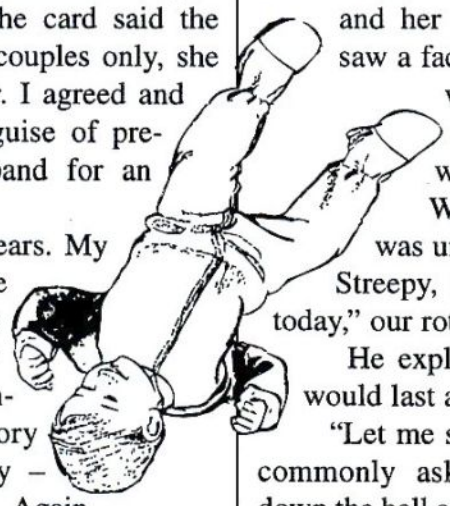
An Exercise in Infantile Scare Tactics

By Ken Davis

When my sister Julie was pregnant with her first child, her then-husband was driving a big rig and wasn't home much. By default, I became the surrogate father.

No, it's not what you think, you damn pervert. It was merely a way for me to help her out when I could.

And one day, she received an invitation to attend a "child safety" class hosted by "Baby Tenda" with the promise of a gift valued at $100. Since the card said the class was for expectant couples only, she asked me to go with her. I agreed and went along, under the guise of pretending to be her husband for an evening.



Fast forward seven years. My pregnant wife Debbie receives an invitation to attend a "Getting Ready for Baby" show, sponsored by the Advisory Council on Child Safety – Baby Tenda of Kansas. Again, the lure of a gift valued at a cool hundred entices the expectant mother. I agree to go to the meeting with her, this time for selfish reasons. I know full well what is in store, but always enjoy the opportunity to attend any function that provides me with fresh fodder for a **HITCH** story.

Since the invitation warned that "late arrivals are not permitted," we showed up to the Harvey Hotel a cool 10 minutes early. As we entered the hotel, a guy who was wearing black polyester pants that were so tight you could see his manhood asked us if we were looking for the baby class. When we answered in the affirmative, he took our last name and wrote it on the form he had secured to his clipboard, before escorting us to a meeting room.

The room was large, with two long rows of chairs. He told us to sit on the front row so that we'd be able to see everything. He gave us our Baby Tenda "manual" and encouraged us to look at the literature that was scattered on a table against the wall. I flipped through the manual with little interest until I got to the last page. For no apparent reason, he had included a page of *Marmaduke* and *Family Circus* cartoons, presumably to ease all parents-to-be with a good-natured chuckle. They made me laugh.

I surveyed the room to see who else had been lured into this den of fools. There was a total seven couples, including a woman and her "domestic partner." I also saw a face I recognized: a guy from work with his wife. He gave me a sheepish grin when I waved to him.

Within minutes, the meeting was under way. "My name is Bill Streepy, and I'll be your presenter today," our rotund host greeted.

He explained that the presentation would last an hour and 50 minutes.

"Let me start by answering the most commonly asked question: Ladies, it's down the hall and to your left," he said. His attempt at humor went unappreciated as he went on to apologize for the warmth of the room: "I know it's hot in here. Just stay away from me because I sweat a lot."

He sat down on the table, which bowed slightly under his weight, and pointed to a table at the back of the room. "I've got some ice water back there for you if you get thirsty."

Realizing that we were trapped in a room the temperature of sunny Florida with a guy who promised to talk for two hours while perspiring buckets, I leaned over and whispered to my beloved, "We can leave if you want."

Nothing doing. "I haven't gotten my gift yet," she said.

Yep, we were in it for the long haul.

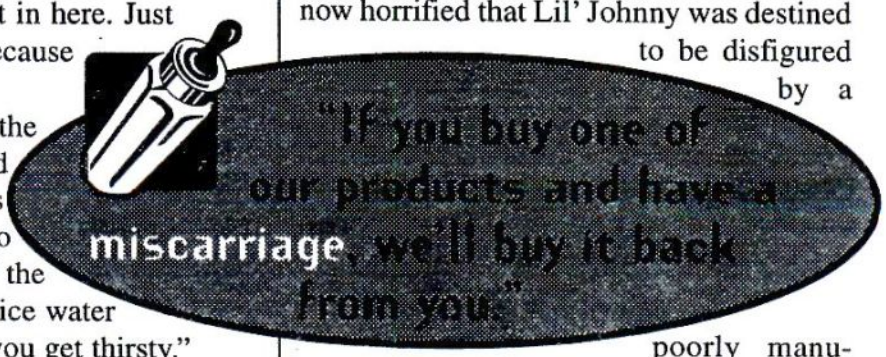
Bill started his presentation by directing us to page one of our manuals, which he also abhorred us from writing in. "I have to reuse these," he explained.

A lady spoke up and said that hers had stuff written in it.

"I know," Bill fumed, "I ask people not to write in these damn things, but they do anyway."

Page one was a pie chart depicting the number of child-related injuries in 1994 and their causes. He went on to read statistics and government reports of doom and gloom, infant mortality rates and the like, all the while peppering his monologue with swear words for emphasis. He told stories of babies getting their heads stuck in the railing of cribs and of falling out of high chairs and cracking their heads open. His eyes teared up when he said, "You know, these kids didn't have to get hurt."

The quick change of mood in the room reminded me of when the Sweeney Sisters from the once-funny *Saturday Night Live* would quickly stop singing their songs of joy and jubilation and say, "I'm gonna bring the room down for a minute." The previously blissful, expectant parents were now horrified that Lil' Johnny was destined to be disfigured by a poorly manufactured product, that he would be poisoned by toxic chemicals if cleaning products weren't labeled with green "Yuck!" stickers or that the use of inferior baby items would surely kill him.



Mr. Streepy explained that he would not be doing his job if he couldn't provide a solution to the impending dangers that await our bundles of joy. The solution he

proposed was simple: Purchase a Baby Tenda product.

Like any good salesman, he went on to demonstrate why the competitors' products were unsafe and not worth the plastic of which they're made. He had a man come out from the audience and sit in a Fisher-Price high chair, which amused everyone except for the guy sitting in the high chair. This exercise was to demonstrate that if a man can sit in this high chair, it is certainly too big to safely keep a child from falling out of it. This is the same demonstration he would later use to demonstrate how durable Baby Tenda products are, touting, "If it can support my weight, you know it's made tough!"

He showed how various products are prone to tip over, fall apart or take off someone's finger in its sharp, jaw-like hinges.

Then, for the finale, Bill introduced the Baby Tenda Safety Feeding Table. He explained that the Tenda Table was first manufactured in 1937 and hasn't had a design change since.

I believed him. It looked like a big box with a hole cut of out the middle for baby's head. It was the Volvo of baby products. I also learned it was the Swiss Army knife of baby products. With the flick of a lever, it turned into a changing table.

The metamorphosis continued as he proceeded to transform the table into other items, much like an origami artist who makes funny shapes out of paper. He turned it into a play pen, then a chalkboard set, then a desk, then a swing, then a booster chair.

The only thing he didn't transform it into was a rocket ship, although I'm convinced with enough encouragement, he could have. After each transformation, he demonstrated its usefulness with a doll meant to represent a nine-month-old infant.

He treated the Baby Tenda Table with more care than he did the doll, at one point instructing, "Don't hold your baby by the neck like I'm doing. He might not like that."

He passed around pictures of the product being used by happy infants, with their equally happy parents looking on. There was a photo of baby's first bath, baby's first haircut, baby's first birthday – all taking place in the Tenda Table. After the pictures had been sufficiently circulated, he taped the photos to the wall so that we could continue to enjoy these Kodak moments from the comfort of our seats.

While discussing the use of the table as a bather, he said that the most common way to bathe a baby is with the parent directly in front of the child. He offered one note of caution: "If it's a boy, I wouldn't get right in front of him because you could get sprayed." I heard one of the audience members politely laugh.

Finished, he opened the floor up for questions. One lady wanted to know if it was safe for the baby to fall asleep in the Tenda Table.

"Oh," Bill answered, "I'd just put the baby to bed when he goes to sleep."

Translation: *For the love of God,* DO *NOT* LET YOUR CHILD FALL ASLEEP IN ONE OF THESE THINGS!

After the requisite Q&A, Bill came to the part we all truly wanted to know: "Hey, dammit, how much?"

He handed a piece of paper to a guy on the front row and asked him to read the price. Only a drum roll could have made this moment more climactic. The man excitedly announced, "One hundred and twenty six dollars!"

Mr. Streepy's face flushed bright red and he exclaimed, "No, that's the part number," and whisked the paper from his hands in a quick and deliberate motion. He then began to write numbers on a big piece of white paper that was affixed to the wall. The actual price, good for one day only, was $724. He outlined payment plans including credit cards, checks, layaway, etc.

He also mentioned a policy that shows he not only works for Baby Tenda, but has a Tenda heart: "If you buy one of our products and have a miscarriage, we'll buy it back from you, no questions asked."

He gave this a minute to sink in.

"My job is done here," he said. "I'll leave you to look at the products and to discuss it with your spouse. I'll wait for you at the back of the room. When you've decided, I'll take your order. You can also exchange your manual for your gift."

For the next five minutes, Debbie and I discussed how we were going to get our gift and get the hell out of there without having to tell him he'd wasted four hours of our collective lives on us. Heeding his warning to keep our distance due to his propensity for deodorant failure, I didn't even want to get close to him. We strategized that Debbie would go give him her manual while I waited by the door.

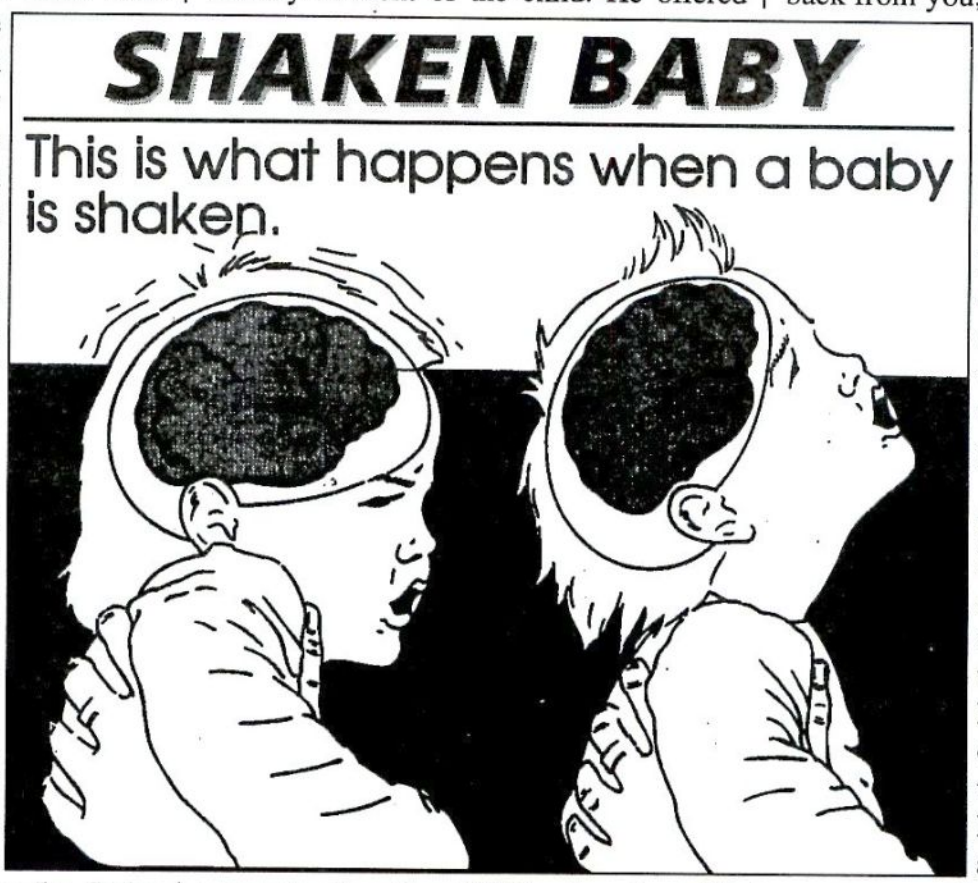
"Tell him I said you couldn't have it," I plotted.

She turned in her manual and we exited with her gift, which was sealed in a pink envelope. Inside, we found:

- coupons for baby product samples by Prenatal 2000;
- an offer to buy life insurance from Commonwealth Life;
- a free subscription to *Mothers Today* magazine;
- a three-day and two-night vacation package (call an 800 number for more details); and
- coupons for $1.96 8" x10" photo enlargements.

On the way home, I realized that my co-worker and his wife were still in there when we left. I hope they made it out with their checkbook still intact.

H



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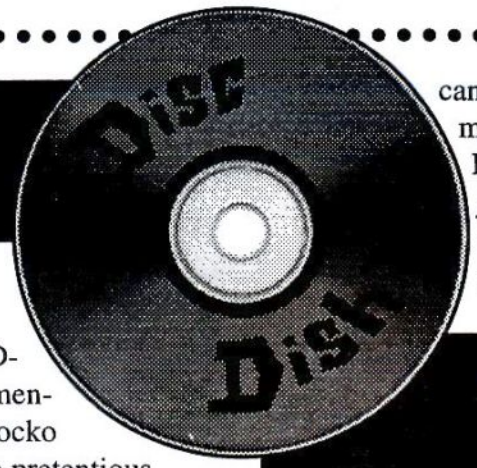


Devo – *Music from The Adventures of the Smart Patrol* (Discovery)
Nothing more than a tool to promote Devo's CD-ROM game, this disc features a few new instrumentals tossed alongside the same old "hits" like "Jocko Homo." Only the opening theme rises above the pretentious computer-noise clutter. I whipped it. Whipped it real good. Into the garage sale bin.

Various Artists – *Jabberjaw...Pure Sweet Hell* (Mammoth)
This is the first CD I've ever seen as a benefit for a club. With those low expectations, I was pleasantly surprised. Everclear delivers an all-business cover of the Smiths' classic "How Soon Is Now," while Low does the Bee-Gees' "I Started a Joke." In the original department, Man or Astro-Man? lets loose their space-instrumental fury as usual on "Earth Station Radio," the Coctails give a little twisted lounge on "Gripper Bite," the Hi-Fives burn rubber with "Skybolt x-66" and Redd Kross does "Star Lust." Other artists represented include Brainiac, Mary Lou Lord, Jawbreaker and Steel Pole Bathtub (band names really are getting stupider, aren't they?). The pulp-inspired art direction is outstanding.

Squeeze – *Picadilly Collection* (A&M)
Squeeze is one of those bands that seems to be have been around forever, even if few this side of the Atlantic admit to hearing of them. And it's a shame, because Squeeze helped forge the great pop scene of the '80s. This quietly released collection serves to remind this country of its all-but-forgotten singles. Some, like their late-'80s "comeback" cut "Hourglass" walk tiptoe across the bridge above silliness, while others like "Pulling Mussles (From the Shell)" and "Tempted" (the latter produced by Elvis Costello) are true classics. Eighteen songs made the cut here, including a few that are just now seeing the light of release.

Crash Test Dummies – *A Worm's Life* (Arista)
While I'm still a big fan of 1994's breakthrough *God Shuffled His Feet* (to which there is much more depth than "Mmm Mmm Mmm Mmm"), I'm disappointed by this half-handed follow-up. Brad Roberts' unusual lyrics remain, but the band's perfect meld of pop so evident last time around is absent. The music just doesn't gel, and there are few true melodies. Perhaps they should've kept Jerry Harrison aboard as producer. After some excellent post-*God* cuts on various soundtracks and tribute albums, I expected better.

Pure – *Generation Six-Pack* (Mammoth/Atlantic)
This alterna-combo's agreeable debut peforms best on the album's throwaways, including the circus dementia of "Wagner's Show" or the pastiche medley named "Popcycle." Cuts like "Lemonade" and "Nobody Knows I'm New Wave" are humorous enough to stand out, but the rest get lost in the sound-the-same shuffle. The towel-wrapped woman on the cover is a cutie, though.

Sweet Vine – *Sweet Vine* (Sony)
In its debut album, the band Sweet Vine sings of mountains and candy. It counts the Allman Brothers among its major influences, but I say that's a bunch of Hootie. Save for an organ, Sweet Vine sounds just like the Blowfish, which could be perceived as either an asset or a liability. Guess which one.

MiSC.

Cartoon Planet Band – *Music for Swinging Superheroes* (Cartoon Network)
The show *Cartoon Planet* – shown both on the Cartoon Network and TBS – is one of television's best-kept secrets. Once another simple excuse to show the same old cartoons, it's now a vehicle for Space Ghost and his evil friends to perform surreal sketches packed with non-sequiturs and sing silly (but clever) songs, many of which have a home on this little gem. Here, you get the grunge-toon theme "Smells Like Cartoon Planet," the scat-crazy "Scat Sandwich," the Hammer parody "Don't Touch Me," the dumb-as-bricks "Minkey Boodle" and an ode to "Mashed Potatoes," among others. For under $7, you can't go wrong. Finding it is the hard part.

SWaNK

Yma Sumac – *Sampler Exotica* (The Right Stuff/Capitol)
Owning all the recent reissues of the multi-octave Peruvian singer's jungle-swank albums might prove costly (not to mention crashingly redundant), so here's a five-song EP to suppress your appetite for exotic yodeling.

***Swingers: Music from the Miramax Motion Picture* (Miramax/Hollywood)**
Any soundtrack that begins with Dean Martin and finishes with Bobby Darin is the mark of an excellent movie, and vice versa. Achieving a cohesiveness unusual for an ST, *Swingers* manages to sooth and groove with a tasteful mix of lounge crooner classics and jazzed-up retro funk. A few originals by Big Bad Voodoo Daddy show up peppered around cuts from King Floyd, The Jazz Jury and Average White Band (one lone song, mercifully). You'd think that hick folkies like George Jones and Roger Miller would stick out like hick folkies on such an album, but damned if they don't mingle quite nicely. Getting a nightlife, as the film's tagline so demands, isn't always as easy as it sounds, but this disc should serve as an incentive.

Ultra-Lounge: *The Crime Scene* (Capitol)
Ultra-Lounge: *Cocktail Capers* (Capitol)
Ultra-Lounge: *Organs in Orbit* (Capitol)
Continuing to catalogue all that is swank, recent volumes of Capitol's incredible Ultra-Lounge series capture everything from the seedy spy themes of yesteryear to uncontrollable Hammond organs. *The Crime Scene* – volume seven for those keeping count – has bandleaders Ray Anthony, Billy May, Nelson Riddle

Album of the Moment

Fine Young Cannibals – *The Finest* (London/MCA)

I will go to my grave proclaiming 1988's "She Drives Me Crazy" as one of the 10 best singles ever. It never fails to bring fond high school senior-year memories of lusting after women who would have nothing to do with me. FYC was big back then, and now, eight years later, we have a greatest hits album – ironic because they've only put out two albums at all (the 1990 remix collection doesn't count) and haven't been heard from since their reign from the top of the charts.

This oft-delayed collection is comprised of cuts from both the '88 *The Raw & the Cooked* and its predecessor, *Fine Young Cannibals* – both outstanding pop albums of enormous promise. Because all of FYC's songs were uniformly excellent in their own way, this album does not disappoint, though it does depress; why did FYC disappear without a trace while other, untalented bands of the same era are allowed to live on and on? Sure, vocalist Roland Gift popped up last year, going solo on a mediocre tune for the *Beautiful Girls* sountrack, but it wasn't the same. Not even close.

Out of *Finest*'s 14 tracks, six come from *The Raw & the Cooked*, including the string of three mammoth hit singles: the aforementioned "Crazy," "Good Thing" (with a terrific barroom piano solo from Jools Holland of Squeeze) and "Don't Look Back." Five come from their debut, including their cover of "Suspicious Minds," which will make you forget about that Elvis guy ever doing it in the first place.

But the real reason the disc merits such a rave is the inclusion of three new songs. They're not "new" exactly; they represent the only finished cuts from FYC's aborted third album.

One of them, "The Flame," can be heard on better radio stations as a single, and it's among the better showcases for Gift's distinct talents. That's not to say the other two unreleased tunes – "Take What I Can Get" and "Since You've Been Gone" – aren't worth singling out. Indeed, if the Cannibals had stayed together and finished that damn record, all three of these songs would've been big hits.

So what's missing? The dark, soulful "As Hard As It Is" from *Raw* is absent, as is "Social Security" (once "Crazy"'s popular B-side. So are "Move to Work" and...oh, about a dozen others.

Even if time won't heal the wounds that keep this standout band apart, we've got *The Finest*.

End of sermon.

and others offering their takes on classic themes from golden-age crime films and TV shows, including *Dragnet*, *The Untouchables*, *Peter Gunn*, *I Spy*, *Mission: Impossible*, *The Man with the Golden Arm* and three Bond films. The disc ends with a true rarity: Alfred Hitchcock's "Music to Be Murdered By." Incredible! *The Crime Scene* is one of the Ultra-Lounge's best.

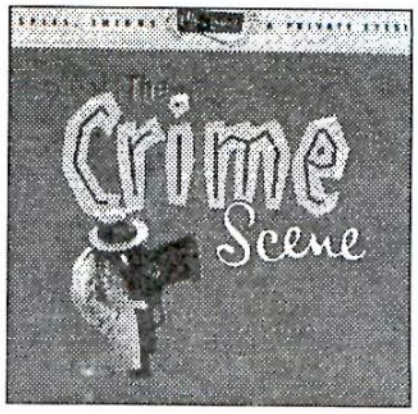
Volume eight – *Cocktail Capers* – is much like *Space Capades* (reviewed in **HITCH** 12): straight-ahead, no-apologies bachelor pad music. It begins with Les Baxter's bouncy "Roller Coaster" and Gloria Wood's erotic siren of a song "Hey! Bellboy!" Bond enthusiasts will enjoy "Underwater Chase" and Leroy Holmes' "I Wanna Be a James Bond Girl," while the Hollywood Studio Orchestra serves up a brassy rendition of Mancini's "Pink Panther Theme." Other highlights include the Out-Islanders' "Honorable Hong Kong Rock" and "Blue Danube Rock" by the Jonah Jones Quartet, but the killer track is a mesh of "Binga Banga Bongo" and "Percolator," two wildly melodic tracks that spin out of control and just won't let up.

For those who dig organ music, *Organs in Orbit* (volume 11) is just the trick. Among vibrato takes on "The Girl from Ipanema," "The Third Man Theme" and "Fever" is a great Martin Denny cut titled "Song of the Bayou." Denny himself is parodied in the album's closer, "Enchanted Farm," which replaces the bird calls on his "Quiet Village" with pig oinks and other barnyard sounds. It's tracks like these that make the entire Ultra-Lounge series worth owning.

But for those who would rather stick their toe into the shallow end rather than dive in head-first, pick up the *Ultra-Lounge Leopard Skin Sampler*. It contains 24 tracks, two from each separate disc. Plus, it comes with a coaster and packaged in smooth leopard skin. Hands down, this is brilliant art direction.

***Mission Accomplished: Themes for Spies and Cops* (Hip-O/MCA)** Sound like a quick cash-in on the heels of a Scientologist's summer blockbuster? It is, but you can't fault it if it's cool. Lalo Schifrin's classic *Mission: Impossible* theme is here, along with its lesser-known companion piece, "Mission: Accomplished." You also have twang-a-billy guitarist Billy Strange serving up a double helping of 007 with "James Bond Theme" and "Goldfinger." Funky soul figures in with the themes from *S.W.A.T.* and *Baretta*, before the album gets really '80s on us with samplings from Jan Hammer's *Miami Vice* score and Harold Faltermeyer's annoying "Axel F." That much I can stand, but Mike Post's *Hill Street Blues* opening sticks out like a sore loser alongside masterworks like John Barry's title theme from *The Ipcress File*.

Lalo Schifrin – *Music from Mission: Impossible* (Hip-O/MCA) A fine companion to *Mission Accomplished* is this newly reissued soundtrack album. Both cuts from *Accomplished* are



here, as well as incidental music from the series, all with Schifrin's jazzed-up style, but lacking the punch of his time-honored title theme. Three bonus tracks are included, with spy-crazy titles like "Self-Destruct" and "Intrigue."

***Scamp: Passport to Excitement!* (Scamp)**

Because of my immense poetry skills (check them out at *http://www.chaoskitty.com/t_chaos/scpoem2.html*), I was able to finagle one of these not-for-sale, 15-track samplers from the retro reissuers at Scamp Records. The disc gathers one choice track from each of its albums. Highlights include a theme from *The Avengers*, Robert Mitchum going calypso on "What's This Generation Coming To?," John Barry's original "James Bond Theme," three Martin Denny cuts and the psycha-bizarre "A Disappointed Love with a Desensitized Robot" (what a title!) by 101 Strings. True to its word, it comes packaged in a passport. Worth whatever it takes to get.

Martin Denny – *The Exotic Sounds of Martin Denny* (Capitol)

From the vaults of the Ultra-Lounge springs forth this mighty two-disc, 40-song bonanza of Polynesian power. All of His Highness' greatest exotica numbers are here, from the legendary "Quiet Village" to the more potent brews of "Swamp Fire" and "Taboo." A bunch of previously unreleased works are thrown in the mix. It makes you want to install a couple of tiki torches right in the middle of the living room. I'd highly recommend doing so, as long as you yank the battery out of the smoke alarm.

It may be too late this year, but take note now for 1997's holiday listening pleasure...

Ultra-Lounge: *Christmas Cocktails* (Capitol)

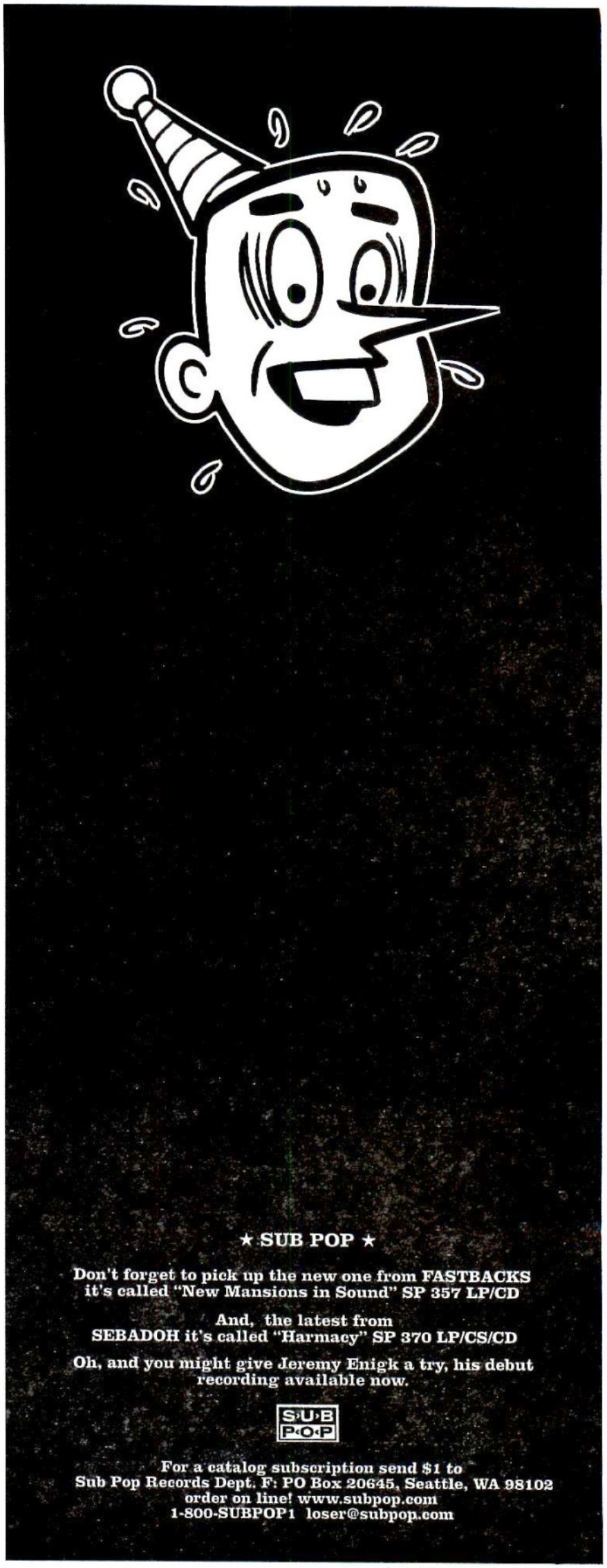
These folks at Captiol have everyone beat when it comes to retro-swank, so when they issued this 18-song disc (with two hidden tracks, one of which features an Alvin and the Chipmunks cameo), I knew I had to get it, sight unseen. I wasn't disappointed. Billy May starts the festivities off with a "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer Mambo" that'll have you wonder why you weren't taught it this way all along. There's also a drum-happy medley of "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town" and "White Christmas" from Jimmy McGriff and a killer "Jingle Bells" by Hollyridge Strings that are so damn *out there*, they bring new meaning to the holiday. And if you ever wondered what "The Nutcracker Suite" might sound like if interpreted by a cocktail band, Les Brown has the answer. I'm seriously considering throwing a Christmas in July party just so I can have an excuse to break this baby out in the summer.

Arthur Lyman – *With a Christmas Vibe* (Rykodisc)

It's xylophones for X-mas as Lyman bangs out a baker's dozen of classics with a soothing, Hawaiian twist. He's even got your mood music for New Year's Eve. Mele kalikimaka, everyone!

***A Classic Cartoon Christmas* (Nick at Nite/Sony)**

Simply put: Musical tracks from all those awesome Rankin-Bass animated-puppet Christmas specials we grew up on, as well as *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. It's the next best thing to watching them.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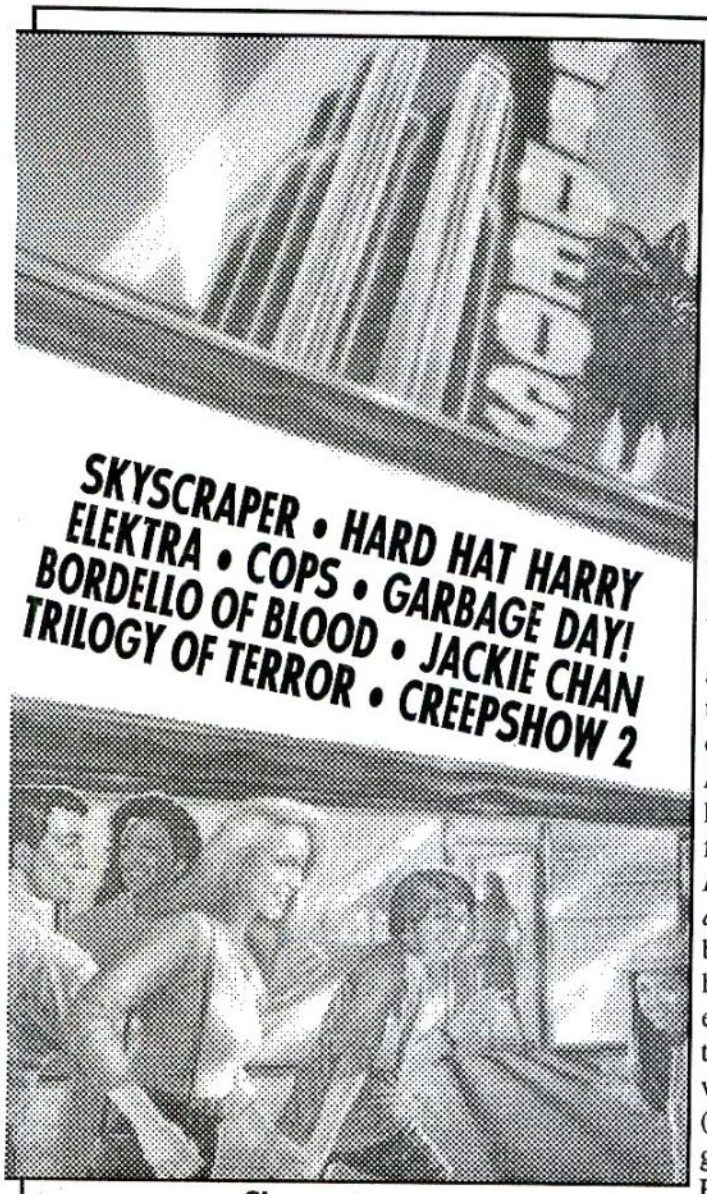


Skyscraper
(1996)
PM Entertainment

★★★★☆

Anna Nicole Smith takes on a downtown Los Angeles skyscraper teeming with terrorists. And if you can believe that, you can probably believe that she'd be able to recognize a line from Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, as she does in an early scene. But Anna's no actress, and she's so bad here that she can't even do a sex scene believably.

Now saddled with a *serious* case of Big Ass, former Playmate of the Year Anna is a helicopter pilot with long, red fingernails who gets mixed up in a crime syndicate deal, complete with a Jamaican overlord and hulky Fabio bodyguards. The box copy says it best, though: "In between steamy showers and lovemaking, ace helicopter pilot Carrie Wink flies into a storm of terror in the Los Angeles skies." Anna, having been taught by her cop husband how to shoot beer bottles, is ready to kick butt.

But she also loves her man, too, as we see her daydream about that picnic she had with her spouse that turned into a humpfest on the red-and-white-checkered tablecloth. The girl's gotten so bloated, it is an utterly grotesque scene. She's achin' for a baby, too, but her husband's got cold feet and tells her the world is just too gruesome to bring a child into. Her response? "Well, excuuuse me for still believin' in Sundays in tha park and bay-bies!"

As straight-to-video actioners go, this one goes the same route as all the others: ripping off *Die Hard*, complete with direct lifts of scenes. Also cribbed from are *Clear and Present Danger* and *The Untouchables*. Anna's got no one to blame for the laziness but her lil' ol' self; she's an executive producer this time 'round, you see, which means she was able to finagle her real-life son (who acts as horribly as she does) into getting a pivotal role as The Boy Who Rides a Big Wheel Around the Office.

You have to wonder if the little tike was allowed on the set the day poor Mama had to get molested by one of the muscle-shirted terrorists. And if so, did they shield his eyes when his mother stabs the guy in the groin with a letter opener?

Videos reviewed in **HITCH** receive star ratings based not on artistic merit, but on levels of enjoyment, from ★☆☆☆☆ (as much fun as a funeral) to ★★★★★ (fun, fun, fun 'til daddy takes the TV away).

Seven
(1995)
New Line Home Video

★★★★★

As I sit through the July-to-December movie rut, I am reminded of how a film can come along once just every so often and throw you for an absolute loop. Last year's *Seven* is one of those rare films that plays against conventions and totally shocks and amazes. It's also well-acted and brilliantly directed.

Brad Pitt and the amazing Morgan Freeman team up as detectives hunting a "Seven Deadly Sins" serial killer. Unlike most films that drown themselves in atmosphere just to do it, this one uses its to an advantage, creating an unsettling mood that sustains itself all the way through. The now-classic ending confrontation between Pitt and Freeman and the killer is still one of the most unnerving things I've ever seen, relying more on imagination than gore to send shivers down the proverbial spine.

Catastrophe!: Hollywood Disaster Movies
(1996)
Brentwood Home Video

★★★☆☆

Hurricanes, earthquakes and other disasters – both natural and man-made – comprise this pseudo-documentary of Tinseltown's love of the disaster genre. Relying solely on clips and monotone narration, *Catastrophe!* continues to veer from an in-need-of-editing piece to a cheesy pleasure.

Most interesting are the behind-the-scenes footage of such Irwin Allen epics as *The Poseidon Adventure* and *The Towering Inferno*. Other featured extravaganzas include the usual suspects: *Earthquake*, *Tidal Wave*, etc. Because few true disaster flicks have been made, the tape stretches the definition to include Biblical epics (lot of flood footage there, you know) and giant insect films.

Taking more liberties than it should, the makers start to work in disaster scenes from non-disaster movies – most notably the oil-well explosion scene in *Tulsa*, which runs for minutes on end, showing no mercy. Another word of warning: Although the box features the title card from *Planet of the Apes*, that film is nowhere to be found.

Hard Hat Harry's Real Life Shuttle Adventures for Kids
(1995)
Publishers' Choice Video

★★☆☆☆

Presumably tired of molesting kids within the confines of a construction site (see *Real Life Giant Construction Equipment for Kids*, as reviewed in **HITCH** 10), genie/pedophile Hard Hat Harry broadens his horizons in this sequel, in more ways than one: 1) he works his sick magic on kids in outer space, and 2) moves beyond white kids to grade-schoolers of the more impressionable, Hispanic variety.

His prey: gap-toothed Maria and the chubby, balding Jerry. When they accidentally unleash the mystical force that is Hard Hat Harry by dropping an astronaut figurine in a gift shop, the first words out of Harry's filthy mouth are: "Next time you guys wanna get hold of me...I'm ready to space boogie!"

Maria casts doubts, saying she's not sure she's old enough, and Harry swoops in to sway her to join his evil side: "What do you mean there's not much a 10-year-old can do? I think that there's not much a 10-year-old *can't* do!"

Forgetting the basic rule of "stranger dan-

ger" classes of never to take gifts from strangers, the kids gratefully accept cheap NASA T-shirts by the predatory Harry. But Harry's not the only pervert on the grounds; a real, live astronaut delivers a speech on the downside of his otherwise nifty space suit: "When an astronaut is handling small items like nuts and bolts, they have difficulty feeling it in their hands through the thick gloves, so we found that when we put a rubber silicone compound on the tips of each finger and thumb, when they grab one of those small nuts or bolts, they've got it, they know they've got it and they're not likely to drop it."

Without wasting a moment, Hard Hat Harry's showing the kids footage of astronauts in their long underwear as he says something about "breaking in to the pressure of reentry" and notes that, for comfort, astronauts wear inflatable pads and "gravity pants." He then tries to get the kids to wear diapers, citing some B.S. about astronauts having painful bladders. Luckily, the kids don't buy it, but it's really all too late; within seconds, the corrupted Maria is fielding questions such as, "Why's it so big, Harry?"

Talking about sleeping in space, Harry says with a wink, "Anything that's not strapped down will flooooat in space!" This is followed by a lengthy talk about the space toilet, which Harry gleefully points out is hooked up to a vacuum cleaner.

"What's even more incredible is how *hard* the crawler works on its journey," Harry instructs on the equipment that moves the shuttles from hangar to launching pad. "It constantly and automatically adjusts itself to keep the shuttle straight up and down at all times!"

We know we've passed the point of no return when poor little Jerry is practically giving Harry an open invitation to defile at will: "Thank goodness there's someone to help us into our space suits! There's no way I'd be able to slip it on myself. This is a little tight through here. Harry, are you coming?"

Where *are* these children's parents???

Tremors II: Aftershocks
(1996)
MCA/Universal Home Video

★★★☆☆

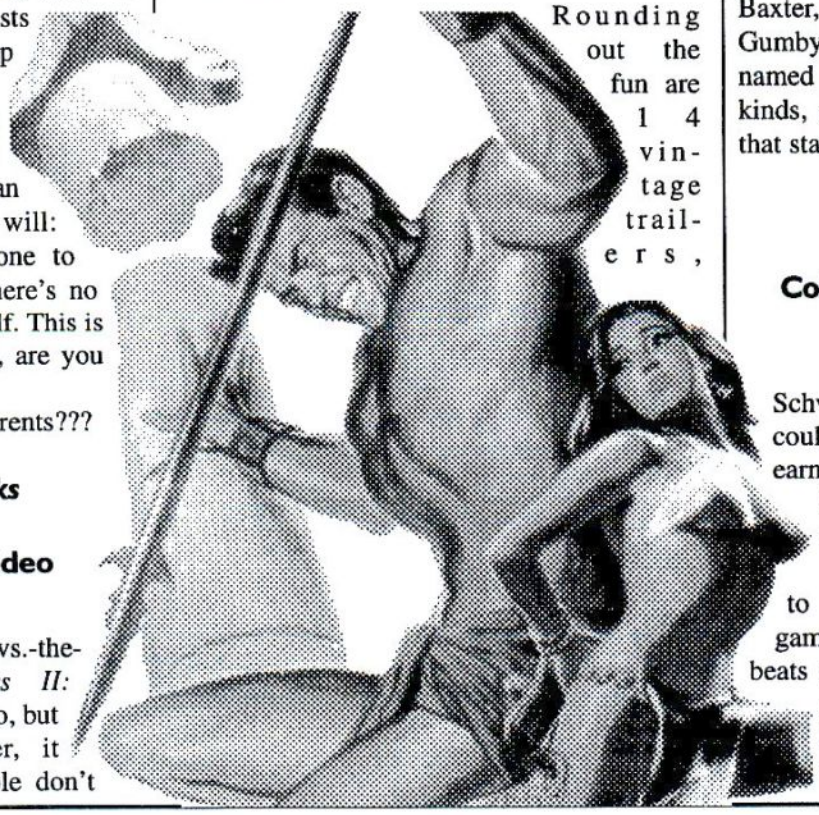
A sequel to the Kevin Bacon-vs.-the-sand-worms sleeper, *Tremors II: Aftershocks* went directly to video, but not because it sucks. Rather, it bypassed theaters because people don't plunk down $7.50 to see Fred Ward. Bacon, too big of a star now after going to the moon, passed on reprising his role, leaving Ward and that bearded wimp from *Family Ties* to play war with the underground vermin.

Ward and militia man Michael Gross enlist the help of shapely Helen Shaver and some lanky kid whose name I forgot. They sit around a lot throwing bombs at the graboids. After a while, they figure out that the graboids have mutated into creatures with legs that can run real fast. They kind of look like squatty, retarded ostriches. So then they throw bombs at them. And that's pretty much it.

Sons of Hercules Theatre Presents: Muscles, Maidens and Monsters, Volume I
(1996)
Something Weird Video

★★★★☆

From fire-breathing dragons and loose loincloths to three-headed dogs and pagan harpies, this celebration of the sword-and-sandal genre has it all. Most of the tape is taken up by eight condensed versions of yesteryear's cheap Italian musclemen epics, like *Fire Monster vs. the Son of Hercules*, *Molemen vs. the Son of Hercules* and *Conqueror of Atlantis*. My favorites are *Medusa Against the Son of Hercules* (watch him poke her eye out with his mighty sword) and Mario Bava's dementedly creepy *Hercules in the Haunted World.*



Rounding out the fun are 14 vintage trailers, ranging from more serious efforts like Orson Welles in *The Tartars* to true mythic schlock like *Goliath and the Vampires* or *The Witch's Curse*. Only a seemingly endless trail of title cards at this tape's beginning damper this veritable orgy.

Dr. Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine
(1965)
Orion Home Video

★★★★☆

Let's not mince words here: I am deeply in love with Susan Hart. She's the fabulous looking brunette who struts around this go-go oddity in a gold lamé bikini, making Frankie Avalon and Dwayne Hickman (not to mention yours truly) go all gaga. She ended up marrying AIP kingpin James Nicholson, one of this film's producers. He's gone now, but she's still around. Thirty years later, I'm sure she doesn't look nearly as good as she does here – and did I mention how gorgeous she is? – so I prefer to remember her forever solely through this flick.

And it's about foppish, non-threatening evil scientist Dr. Goldfoot (Vincent Price), bent on ruling the world by seducing one tycoon at a time via his sultry, curvy robots. Let me now take this opportunity to again mention the delicious Susan Hart. Hickman is the blue-balled richie rich taken for a ride by the hot-as-hell Susan Hart and Sonic pitchman Avalon is the bumbling junior G-man who's also got his beach balls in a sling over a luscious heart-melter known as Susan Hart.

Crazy slapstick and AIP in-jokes ensue (this is the only film in history to show Annette Funicello in stocks) as Price does his *Pit and the Pendulum* thing while Susan Hart gets me hot under the collar. Throw in a nutball, hip-swingin' score by space-age ace Les Baxter, an outrageous credits sequence by Gumby meister Art Clokey and a sexy vixen named Susan Hart causing damage of all kinds, and you've got a real cool spy spoof that stars Susan Hart.

The Running Man
(1987)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video

★☆☆☆☆

This must be the worst Arnold Schwarzenegger movie ever made. One could argue that, say, *Hercules in New York* earns that distinction, but at least you could laugh at that. This is just an abomination in every sense of the word.

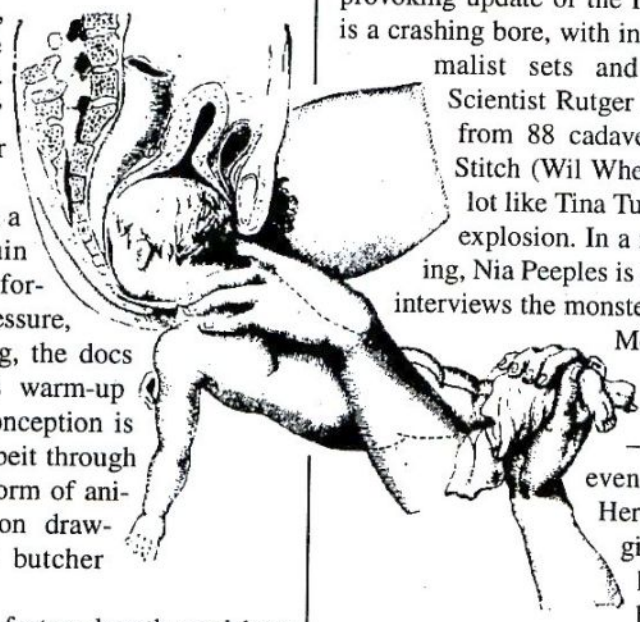
Arnie is a big tough guy that is forced to become a contestant in a futuristic game show of sadism. Because he is big, he beats up all the opponents. Because he is Arnie, he says something funny after he kills each one. Boy oh boy, I never tire of that gimmick. The only thing

cool about this cheapie is an early scene where a prisoner gets his head blown off by a laser, and he keeps running for a few seconds after. Following that, however, everything is so bad and so *'80s* that you will wish you were that guy.

Paul Michael Glaser, one-half of *Starsky and Hutch* and the doofus behind *Kazaam*, made his directorial debut with this, and he hasn't improved one iota.

No Greater Sin: The Wonders of Birth, Vol. I
(1994)
Something Weird Video
★★★★★

The purveyor of the wildest and most entertainingly delirious compilations to be found on VHS tape, Something Weird Video has delivered another classic with this collection of vintage childbirth primers. The tape kicks off with *The Wondrous Story of Birth*, a '50s medical short that demonstrates in vivid, blood-red color the birth of a baby, the birth of triplets via Cesarean section and – prepare to wince and experience phantom pain, fellas – the circumcision of a newborn boy. Most disturbing is the expulsion of the afterbirth, which looks like a prize-winning eggplant from the state fair.



Hilariously, prior to delivery, the crack team of surgeons go "practice" yanking a leather baby through the small rubber hole on a plastic mannequin with shiny metal forceps. With much pressure, poking and prodding, the docs seem to relish this warm-up event. The act of conception is even represented, albeit through the most primitive form of animation: crude crayon drawings on crumpled butcher paper.

Following is the feature-length roadshow scare story *Love and Birth*. It's one of those seriously dated black-and-white affairs in which characters use phrases like "swell" and "hiya, fish face," teens dance the jitterbug, mom and dad sleep in separate beds and no one – repeat, *no one* – ever says they are pregnant, opting instead for the words "in trouble."

The plot concerns high school good girl Joan, whose mother is much too old-fashioned to take the time to explain the birds and the bees. Joan goes ga-ga for a smooth player named Jack, who, after buying her a large Coke, tells her he loves her so he can...well, get her into trouble. Then Joan spends the next few months pacing her bedroom sobbing, wondering why she's missed her period. To add insult to injury, Jack has to go die in a plane crash to leave Joan to deal with the crisis alone. (It probably doesn't help Joan's self-esteem that her squeaky-clean brother's pet name for her is "Butch.")

Attempting to save the day is the creepy, bespectacled teacher of a "social and moral hygiene class," who gives his students the answers they seek. One lad inquires what a venereal disease is. Ol' Teach suggests the youth "read a good book on the subject. Why, I happen to have one here I just finished. You're welcome to borrow it if you like."

After a stint in insurance, the saintly teacher returns to torment his pupils with images of sheer horror: doctors making incisions on vaginas during delivery, syphilitic victims with gaping holes in their faces...hell, you name it, and it's unspooling on the projector from hell. In the end, everyone's happy and that whore Joan squeezes a being through her rookie womb just fine.

Mr. Stitch
(1995)
WarnerVision
★☆☆☆☆

What is meant to be a deep and thought-provoking update of the Frankenstein legend is a crashing bore, with inane dialogue, minimalist sets and lofty intentions. Scientist Rutger Hauer takes pieces from 88 cadavers and makes Mr. Stitch (Wil Wheaton), who looks a lot like Tina Turner after a furnace explosion. In a real stretch of casting, Nia Peeples is a psychologist who interviews the monster.

Most of the "action" is confined to a single white room – so bright you can't even see any walls. Here, the actors spout gibberish about the human soul and blah blah blah. Not much happens. Writer-director Roger Avary (who co-wrote *Pulp Fiction*) had much better results with his previous effort, *Killing Zoe*.

I Posed for Playboy
(1991)
Republic Pictures Home Video
★☆☆☆☆

A Bunny's Tale
(1985)
Prism Entertainment
★☆☆☆☆

So here's the premise of this made-for-TV trash: Three women defy the expectations of families and friends by taking it all off for *Playboy*. Trouble is, none of these women are attractive enough to make this story believable.

Ex-*L.A. Law*yer Michelle Greene is an ugly-duckling stockbroker who is forced out of her job when she poses, but then all is happy when one of her co-workers takes a sudden shine to her. Lynda Carter is a small-town homemaker who works at a bowling alley. She decides to pose when she discovers that her husband has a *Playboy* subscription. When confronted, he says he just reads it for the articles.

Lastly, Amanda Peterson – virtually missing in action since *Can't Buy Me Love* – is so absolutely unappealing as an Ivy League English major who shows her rich daddy she's not the perfect daughter by showing the world her mammaries.

Most grating is the talking-head testimonial approach, where our three subjects speak directly into the camera to tell their stories. Lynda says that having *Playboy* approach her "was like having Betty Crocker come into my kitchen to ask for my apple pie recipe!" That's a disgusting allegory once we see Lynda – pounds away from *Wonder Woman* – trying to act alluring during her pictorial shoot. She's got such a cottage-cheese frame that you want to remove your LensExpress contacts so you don't have to view such horrors.

The soft-focus look and "I am woman" theme make this junk ideal for repeated playings on the Lifetime cable network, but the tape version includes shots of real, live Playmate Brittany York's real, live, impressive chest. The most absurd moment comes when Lynda's bald hubby gets all teary-eyed as he's moving out, ashamed of the pictures he's never seen. "Well, you're going to see them right now!" Lynda cries, forcing the magazine in his face. "There," she sobs, "is *this* so terrible?"

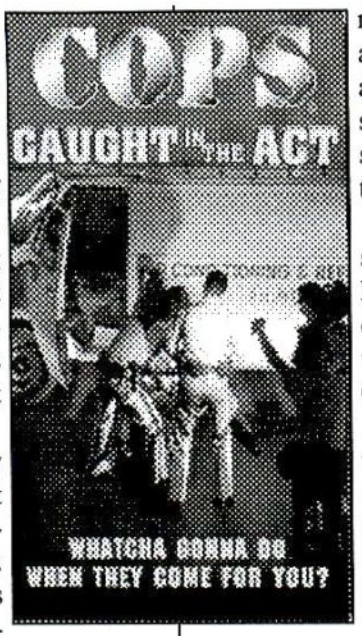
Well, *yeah*, Lynda, it is.

Telling a similar tale is another made-for-TV abortion entitled *A Bunny's Tale*. Kirstie Alley stars as feminist Gloria Steinem, who went undercover not as a *Playboy* centerfold, but as a bunny among the exclusive *Playboy* clubs. So Kirstie dons ears, a tail and a hot 'n' skimpy blue suit and goes to work amidst drunks and sexist pigs. This being a TV movie and this being before Kirstie got chunky, we want to see her naked, but don't. And that's just too bad, *because this phlegm – I* mean, film – is so lifeless that it's a headache-inducer.

COPS: Caught in the Act
(1996)
Barbour/Langley Productions
★★★★★

I tell ya, these *COPS* videos are great. Even when they saddle themselves with a

loose theme and don't always stick to it, the second you hear that fungus-like Inner Circle song, you know you're in for some solid entertainment, reality-style. This installment of the successful video compilations from the long-running FOX series turns its flashlight on criminals being caught red-handed (or red-faced, as is sometimes the case) in the act of law-breaking.



Included are the obligatory car chases and foot races that leave the rotund officers panting like stray puppies in August. A highlight is the notorious two-guys-hiding-under-a-plastic-wading-pool-with-their-feet-sticking-out scene. Before you know it, 50 minutes have flown by, and you're ready for more.

Garbage Day!
(1995)
ChildVision Educational Films

★★★★☆

In an obsession that is just plain unhealthy, a five-year-old, towheaded boy worships Gus, his neighborhood garbageman. This fixation has gotten so bad that the tot sets his alarm early for garbage day. He's even got them all starred on his calendar. When the alarm goes off, he's waking his dad up as if it were Christmas morning: "Dad! Dad! Wake up! It's Garbage Day!"

Dad happily arises to help the little 'un tote the trash cans to the curb to await the arrival of their pal. The boy's even got a Thermos of coffee tied around his neck for Gus' consumption. Gus, as it turns out, is slightly sinister.

"I wish I could see everything that happens on Garbage Day," the budding little Hinckley says.

"I think that can be arranged," says the oily, Italian-looking Gus, and somehow turns back time so the three of them are at the garbage truck depot during the dead of night. Dad and son follow Gus around the entire day on his route. Gus fills his own truck with water balloons and lets his mentors watch them pop in the compactor. This pisses me off, because as a taxpayer, I pay Gus good money to work, not to perform party tricks.

We are then treated to a riotous sequence of bloopers involving the truck's automated arm's inability to correctly lift the cans. This is scored with an obvious rip-off of Yello's hit "Oh Yeah," as popularized in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. As this sequence ends, the little boy's popping up out of unsanitary garbage pails. Way to supervise, Dad.

Telling his passengers that milk bottles are recycled to make Frisbees, Gus asks, "Why throw anything away when it can be made into something else?" overlooking such items as used condoms, tampons and toilet tissue.

To show how bulldozers squash the trash, Gus smashes a line of perfectly good watermelons. What the fuck is wrong with doing this demo on *trash*, Gus?

As this poignant film ends, the trio is standing atop a landfill at sunset, looking over the stinking pit of filth with pride and awe as if it were the fucking Grand Canyon.

To pay Gus back for the field trip, Dad and son have a krazy surprise awaiting him when he comes to pick up the trash at their house: a can full of helium balloons! This gesture may be from the heart, but it's pretty stupid if you ask me, for two reasons: 1) the balloons are filled with helium, which means Gus' gift immediately floats away, and 2) even if he were able to grab a couple, you know Gus wouldn't waste any time in popping the damn things with his vehicle of doom.

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: I'm Dreaming of a White Ranger
(1995)
Saban Home Entertainment

★☆☆☆☆

That time-honored story of the Christ child is eschewed for today's generation in favor of slave-wages midgets tripping up intergalactic monsters with a sack full of marbles.

Yes, it's Christmastime again, and those Power Rangers – hanging out together as they always do – are volunteering to help some underprivileged kids have a great holiday. Buff Tommy even asks a little black girl to help him put the star on the tree. This delights the sorrowful girl, but I think Tommy just does it so he can look up her dress.

Meanwhile, Kimberly helps out by strumming Hanukkah songs on her guitar when she's not busy biting her bottom lip. (Don't get me wrong; it makes *me* hot, but she just won't quit, the minx!)

Those bad guys decide to take over Santa's workshop and stop manufacturing traditional toys in order to produce only toys of pain and evil (like Power Rangers stuff, I would presume).

When the Power Rangers get wind of this holiday coup, they zap themselves over to the North Pole, where there's an awful lot of sunlight.

Cops eat donuts, a kid asks Santa for "a hamburger – no, a cheeseburger" and the Power Rangers all save the day without ever turning into the Power Rangers. And no one dreams of a white Ranger, either – especially not me.

Christian Youth Scare Films: Volume I
(1996)
Something Weird Video

★★★★☆

First, let me make it clear that to review this tape is *not* to make fun of the Christianity religion. The films contained within are, however, funny, presenting Christian teens as living, walking, breathing loaves of Wonder. They all are so gosh-darned polite and drink a lot of milk, as is evident in the three, black-and-white, 1950s Family Films presentations here: *Teenage Conflict*, *Teenage Witness* and *Teenage Code*.

In *Teenage Conflict*, close-cropped, basement-dwelling electronics buff/marbles champ Joe starts wondering how the theories of God can co-exist with those of his beloved science. Choosing science over the Lord, Joe attempts to sway his folks over to his side by inviting a prominent scientist over for supper. The plan backfires, and God wins.

In *Teenage Witness*, close-cropped locksmith buff Terry is asked by a heathen classmate to teach him the key-making trade, for obvious, less-than-holy purposes. Terry appeals to his classmate's good side, and gets him to attend his youth group. God wins again.

In *Teenage Code*, close-cropped painting buff Bill is asked by a gang of hoodlums to paint a mural on their clubhouse wall, with the faint promise of membership once the job is finished. Bill is hesitant. To get him to finish, they give him the answers to the upcoming history quiz. Bill cheats until his conscious gets to him and he rips up his test paper, prompting concern from his teacher. The winner, in a three-peat...God.

The Thing with Two Heads
(1973)
N/A

★★☆☆☆

It's not nearly the laff-riot one might expect: Bigoted scientist Ray Milland is suffering from cancer, so he demands his head be transplanted onto the body of a healthy

Cool Contest – *That's No Lie!*

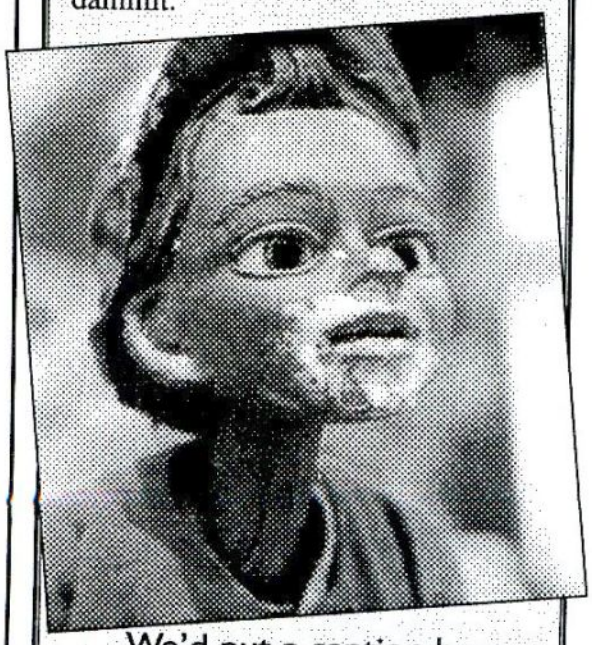
To "celebrate" the New Line Home Video release of the forgettable *The Adventures of Pinocchio* starring Martin Landau, Jonathan Taylor Thomas and a scary monkey puppet, we at **HITCH** decided to whip up an incredibly fantabulous contest to take up this extra space.

If you see the movie (and we pray that you don't have to), there's a particularly rollicking scene in which Pinocchio invades a bakery and eats many sweets and treats. Having no manners, he opts not to use utensils; therefore, the crazy marionette gets cream topping all over his face! Ha!

Below lies a still from this riotous sequence. Now all you have to do is write a caption for it. Be clever.

Then e-mail your caption to RLott@aol.com by Feb. 1. The most creative and deliriously warped caption will receive many cheap prizes we have laying around the office.

Will you win a Brian Bosworth *Black Out* window sticker? A still from Sinbad's *First Kid*? Only *you* will know what crap we have to unload if you come up with the winning entry. You can submit as many captions as you like. Just send them, dammit.



We'd put a caption here, but then, that'd kinda defeat the purpose of this whole column now, wouldn't it?

Take it off, *Invisble Man*, baby ... take it all off.

human. Imagine his surprise when he wakes up to find himself neck-and-neck with burly black guy Rosey Grier!

He's mighty pissed! But his situation doesn't keep him from smoking cigarettes or using the racist phrase "you people" a lot. In fact, he's bent on destroying Grier so he can take over his body. Strangely, this isn't played for laughs. About one-third of it is an extended, patience-testing motorcycle chase that predates *Smokey and the Bandit*.

The shots of Rosey running around hallways with a dummy head attached to him are priceless. The thing ends not soon enough with Rosey and wife driving away in a car, singing "Oh, Happy Day."

The Invisible Man
(1933)
MCA/Universal Home Video

★★★★☆

H.G. Wells' tale of a scientist who has discovered a way to make himself invisible but not a way to reverse it is surprisingly mean-spirited and sarcastic. Claude Rains, appearing in bandages until the final scene, stars as the pissed-off title character who delights in using his newfound discovery to commit acts of evil – stealing bicycles, pushing people down a flight of stairs, derailing trains – you know, the usual.

Briskly paced at an under 90 minutes, *The Invisible Man* has a greatest asset in its marvelous invisible effects. Even though they're outdated at 60+ years of age, they're pretty damn good! Usually, pre-Spielberg FX are laughable at best; these are amazing. The scene in which the Invisible Man smokes a cigarette is a standout.

Much has been made of the film's footprints-in-the-snow finale, which brings a not-so-happy close to a bitter story. Like all of Universal's horror films of this period, this gave birth to a handful of increasingly inferior and gimmicky sequels, among them *Return of the Invisible Man*, *The Invisible Woman* and *The Invisible Man's Revenge*. Today, the invisibility myth endures, most recently in Full Moon's *Mandroid* sequel, *Invisible: The Chronicles of Benjamin Knight*.

Kids' Commercials from the Golden Age of Television: Volume 2
(1994)
Something Weird Video

★★★☆☆

A glut of Barbie ads and food spots that really don't qualify as kids' commercials mar this otherwise great collection of 30- and 60-second wonders. As with the first volume (reviewed last issue), many give you the creeps, including:

- An ad for Disney characters bubble bath in which a little boy says, "Dopey is pretty."
- The announcer on the Puppetrina spot (a female marionette) instructs with glee, "Put your hand inside her and feel her come to life!"
- A Chatty Baby doll asks, "Can I have a cookie?" without moving its mouth, thereby aping demon progeny.
- A patently racist PF Flyers jingle centers around the word "jigaboo."
- Potentials buyers of the Playtex Dryper Baby doll are told, "When she wets, just think of all the fun you'll have..."
- A cream cereal claims to be "100% digestible!"

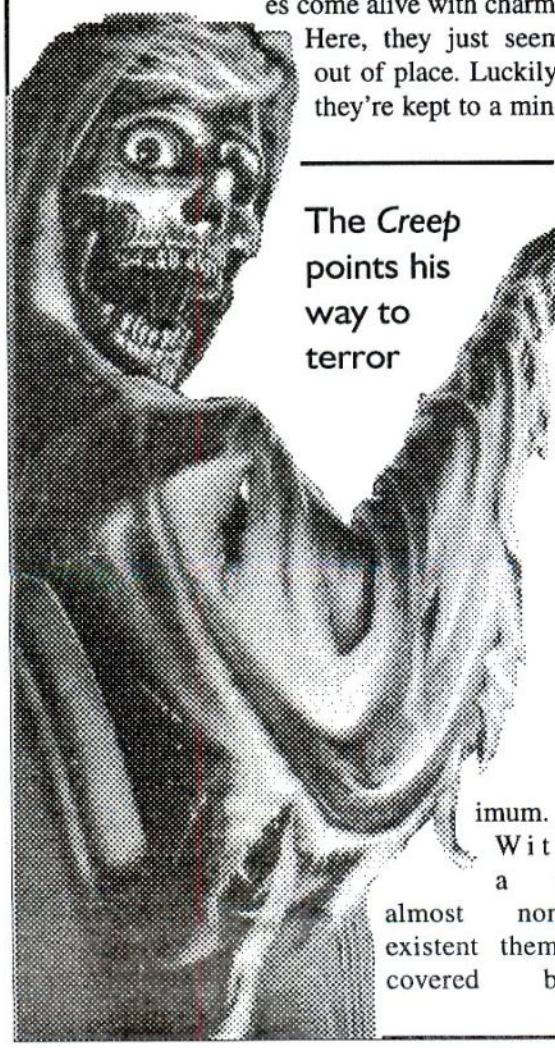
Somewhere in between there's a steady stream of Barbie and Ken's short adventures, which soon becomes overkill (*must* we see Barbie at a frat party?). So much so that nearly half the spots listed in the box aren't included – like the Telestar video game, Bowl-a-Matic 300 and Evil Knievel's Motocross – all of which I really wanted to see. In fact, the tape ends right in the middle of a spot, and all because Barbie and her pals hogged the run-

ning time. Damn you, Barbie. May you die a slow death and finally realize your boyfriend is a flamer.

Mystery Science Theater 3000: The Movie
(1996)
MCA/Universal Home Video
★★★★★

Though it had one of the lowest grosses for a feature film all year, the big-screen adaptation of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* was probably the funniest movie released in a 12-month timespan. For their first (and likely last) theatrical outings, Mike Nelson and the 'bots sit down (for less than 75 minutes) for a screening of Universal's '50s entry *This Island Earth*.

Surprisingly, the concept of watching a movie of others watching a movie works just fine in the transition from the cathode tube. Thanks to the super-sharp script, the jokes fly at you like hailstones, most of them causing major damage. It's the host segments – in which the Satellite of Love crew crashes into the Hubble telescope and perform other silly antics – that feel forced. On TV, these sketches come alive with charm. Here, they just seem out of place. Luckily, they're kept to a minimum. With an almost non-existent theme covered by Dave Alvin, the film earns its many laughs right up to the very end, when Mike and the 'bots ridicule their *own* credits. That's one concession for the better, though this show really remains on the small screen. May it live forever.



The *Creep* points his way to terror

Creepshow 2
(1987)
Starmaker Entertainment
★★★★★

Pay no attention to the wretched cheese-synth score or the sub-standard animation of the frame story. This horror anthology – as with the '82 original, a collaboration between George Romero and Stephen King – though made on the cheap, delivers scares and howls (of laughter) in its trilogy of tales.

First up is "Old Chief Wood'n Head," in which a teenage gang robs and kills poor 'n' tubby general store owners George Kennedy and Dorothy Lamour. The cigar store Indian – whom we see move ever so slightly from frame one – comes to life to take revenge, hungry for a scalping. In shadows, the Chief looks like Woody Woodpecker. Next up, four pot-smoking teens take a dip in the lake in "The Raft" and find themselves the prey of a giant roving Hefty bag that spurts goo. One by one, they fall victim to the floating trash receptacle.

Last but not least pits former Bond girl Lois Chiles against "The Hitch-Hiker." Late going home from an extramarital fling, lovely Lois accidentally mows down a black guy with her Mercedes. She flees the scene, unseen. Problem is, the damn guy won't stay dead. Told with a welcome helping of humor, this story is easily the best, as good as anything from the first *Creepshow*, thanks largely to a real performance by Chiles.

The aforementioned cartoon wraparound finds a voracious young comic fan under attack by a quartet of bike-riding bullies. Billy suddenly has the upper hand when giant Venus fly traps eat the kids up. I don't know how he did it, either. Our host The Creep (played by Tom Savini, but with someone else's voice dubbed) promises a third "issue," but it never came. Too bad.

Max Maven's Mindgames
(1984)
MCA/Universal Home Video
★☆☆☆☆

You don't ever see this magician Max Maven around anymore, and that's a good thing. With his black hair slicked back, earring in one ear and pencil-thin mustache and goatee, the damned guy looks like a Satanist, albeit a Satanist who can produce a rabbit from a hat! Here, in this hour-long home video special, Max "communicates" with the audience in a series of magic tricks, most of which are considerably lame, like the opening stunner, in which he "makes" your two index fingers touch one another. *Oooôoh!*

Filmed on a set reminiscent of *Match Game PM*, but with strobe lights and dry ice, Max uses his brain powers to make you select a flag (the only neat trick) before moving on to requisite card tricks. In between, he acts like a moron in some horrid "comedy" bits. Many of his tricks have backdrops – the jungle, a surgical ward, a Vegas casino – but no matter what the locale, they reek of cheap thrills.

With support from a talking computer, a rotund ratings rep and a pair of speechless sequined sluts, Max's show includes a musical number to "Yankee Doodle," a clip from *Battlestar Galactica* and a man in a duck suit.

Little Red Riding Hood
(1960)
Something Weird Video
★★★★☆

When it comes to making entertaining musical kids' films based on fairy tales, Disney has nothing on the Mexicans. Case in point: K. Gordon Murray's *Little Red Riding Hood*, in which the precocious little moppet kisses strangers and has the singing voice of a Streisand-aged chartreuse. She attracts the attention of the resident chop-licking pervert wolf and his midget sidekick skunk, whose

lines are accelerated to heighten the humor, yet make them incomprehensible.

While she's not been chased by the sex-crazed wolf, Little Red hunts for her lost pal Freckles, encounters a giant angry spider and belts out tunes with Broadway-bound perfection. The voices match the characters' mouths as often as the plot makes sense, in usual Murray fashion. Furthermore, there are more sped-up scenes in its 90 minutes than a whole season of ABC's TGIF promos.

The tape earns an extra star by throwing on a generous helping of previews of other Murray offerings and like kiddie schlock, from *Pinocchio* and *Tom Thumb* to *The Secret of Magic Island* and *The Wonderful Land of Oz*. Rounding the trippy experience out is a stop-motion short called *One Little Indian*, starring "the bestest, brownest" magic Indian boy. In it, the deformed, squatty puppet learns about traffic safety in ways so repetitive and cloying that it had my wife in tears, screaming, "*Why* are you watching this?"

Trilogy of Terror
(1975)
MPI Home Video
★★★☆☆

Trilogy of Terror II
(1996)
N/A
★★★★☆

Karen Black plays four roles in *Trilogy of Terror*, a three-story anthology film, as its name suggests. Thankfully, your enjoyment of it does not depend upon your tolerance for Karen Black. This cult item was made for TV back before Karen Black became the showbiz ho she is today.

In the opener, she's a frumpish teacher who gets drugged by a student who wants to see what she looks like naked. The twist, though a bit predictable, makes the story worthy. The second, in which Karen plays twin sisters, is pretty mediocre. But it's the clincher, the much-talked-about "Zuni Fetish Doll" tale, that has let this movie stand the test of time.

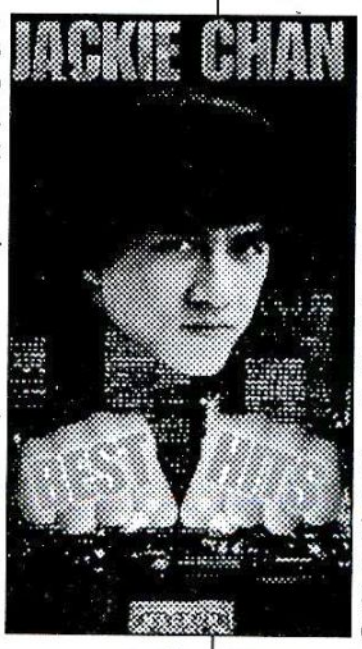
Basically, Karen finds herself trapped in her own apartment with this butt-ugly, spear-wielding, sharp-toothed doll that has sprung to life. It frightened me for weeks as a child, and even now it's still got some punch. The little bastard was revived for Dan Curtis' recent made-for-cable sequel, in which cops investigate the scene of the crime, take the little Zuni guy to the museum for research, where lithe Lysette Anthony is terrorized as the guy comes back to life and chases through the halls and even into an elevator. Ingenious for a while, the story eventually becomes a virtual copy of the earlier version.

All told, though, *Trilogy of Terror II* improves on the original. Anthony stars in all three stories, and she's a better actress than Black, not to mention a lot easier on the eyes. In the weakest segment, she becomes an unwilling pawn in a game of hide and seek with the ghost of her dead son; the twist ending makes it all better. The first story, however, is a real killer, concerning rats the size of a dogs that steal corpses out of their coffins in an old graveyard. Claustrophobic and clever, it's a winner.

For the record, in all three stories, somebody pushes somebody else down a flight of stairs.

Jackie Chan Best Hits
(1996)
Magnum Video
★★★★☆

Yes, that broken English of the title and on through the opening credits ("Most thrilling parts of Jackie Chan") signifies a real bargain-basement video rack find. The cut-and-paste cover is another clue. So is the audio track from another program that seeps through the first minute of the tape. Still, there's nothing inherently wrong with 90 minutes of fight scenes from Jackie's films.



There's a fight with chopsticks over a dumpling. Jackie rips one guy's hair off and starts fighting him with it. When kicking an old guy, Jackie is aided in battle by a trio of girl ghosts who look like Shields and Yarnell with hula skirts and Raggedy Ann wigs. In a looong scene (some segments hit the 10-minute mark), Jackie makes his way through a gauntlet of warrior robots with cannonballs for hands. In the goriest highlight, Jackie skewers a guy with a sword from the floor below where the man is sitting.

All of these scenes come from Jackie's earlier films (so early it is difficult to recognize him at times), none of which I have seen. I toyed with the idea of deducting one whole star for Magnum's failure to identify from which movies the scenes were culled, but cut it some slack given its under-$10 price tag.

Nightmare Theatre's Late Night Chill-O-Rama Horror Show: Volume I
(1996)
Something Weird Video
★★★★☆

Another solid entry in Something Weird's line of preview tapes with increasingly difficult titles, the two-hour *Chill-O-Rama* offers a surprising number of trailers that actually prove scary in 60 seconds or less.

Among them: the original *The Fly*, relying on little footage from the movie; *The Return of Count Yorga*, with its slo-mo shot of the Count running right at you; and *Mansion of the Doomed*, thanks to some near-subliminal cuts.

Heavy on the sci-fi, the tape is comprised of ads for epics, drive-in quickies and repackaged serials. Favorites include the partially animated *Fabulous World of Jules Verne* (via "Mystimation!"), the Crimson Ghost in *Cylcotrode X*, *The Screaming Skull*, *Curse of the Dead Hand*, *The Beast Must Die!* (with its whodunit "werewolf break"), Roger Corman's classic *Death Race 2000*, the anthology *Vault of Horror*, the disco inferno of Gerry Anderson's *UFO*, *Son of Blob* (starring "Larry Hagman and his pals"), the black magic *Equinox*, *The Ghost of Dragstrip Hollow* ("He's got the hot-rodders va-va-voomin' and the hepcats za-za-zoomin'! They're all alive to the jive!"), Edgar Allan Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and the demented fun of *Dr. Phibes Rises Again*.

Granted, some of the titles – like *Captain Mephisto and the Transformation Machine* and *Burn, Witch, Burn!* – are often better than the movies themselves. Just about everything is here, from true classics (*Planet of the Apes*) to the mindless cheese (*Werewolves on Wheels*).

Even Blacula ("Dracula's soul brother"), saucy redheads (*Frankenstein's Bloody Terror*), Ray Harryhausen creatures, a whip-wielding Telly Savalas (*Horror Express*), the sexalicious Caroline Munro (*The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*) and vintage footage of media interviews with dope fiend Bela Lugosi pop up.

To paraphrase the *I, Monster* spot, recommended only if your veins can stand the cold torment of evil.

Strange Days
(1995)
Fox Video
★★☆☆☆

This big-budget bomb from James Cameron *deserved* to bomb, and it did. Despite an interesting premise, it has little pulse. It also asks you to believe that the murder of a spoiled rap star could spark riots and dischord such as the world has never seen. Tupac Shakur proved that wrong.

On the eve of the year 2000, Ralph Finnes plays a black-market dealer of virtual reality clips that are wired directly to one's cerebral cortex. This allows a person to feel exactly what they see – mostly sex. Somehow, he gets involved in a murdery mystery that involves his rock star ex-girlfriend (Juliette Lewis, who sings two songs and, worse, bares her repulsive body, which looks like one of an eight-year-old).

I don't know who told Lewis she could walk around topless or in see-through tops the entire time, but it was probably the same person who told Kathryn Bigelow (last of *Point Break*) she could direct. As *Blue Steel* and *Near Dark* showed, style doesn't make for substance. Give it up. The only thing more embarrassing than the needless quick-cut, two-camera shots of one person talking are the end credits, in which the actors' names are superimposed over their respective grainy photos – an effect best left to cop shows of the '70s. At least Angela Bassett kicks ass.

Ho Ho Noooooooo!!!
It's Mr. Bill's Christmas Special!
(1996)
Starmaker Entertainment
★★★☆☆

Don't be misled. This is not an "all new adventure" of the henpecked clay figure as the box promises, as the last segment is from an early *Saturday Night Live* episode that's available on Starmaker's *The Mr. Bill Collection* (1993), as well as the earlier *Mr. Bill Looks Back*. It also does not quite reach the stated 30-minute mark, falling a few shy. Lastly, Father Guido Sarducci is not the guest star; given that he and his unfunny "Christmas in L.A." home video in which he chats about nothing with various former *SNL* writers take up about a third of the running time, I'd say he deserves equal billing.

All that aside, it's still Mr. Bill, and any Bill is better than no Bill at all. In this semi-all-new adventure, Mr. Bill, Sally, son Billy and dog Spot sit in their home awaiting Christmas. Mr. Hand drops by to drop things on them and generally be not nice. Father Guido also stops for a spell, appearing the same size as Mr. Bill, which is a bit surreal. Mr. Hand makes "egg dog" by throwing Spot in a blender, but Father Guido doesn't mind. They all watch Father Guido's boring tape. Then Mr. Hand reads them a version of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* – a segment that is computer-animated, which really destroys the fun out of seeing a Play-Doh man mutilated. Is nothing sacred?

In the best scene, Mr. Hand reads "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" as Bill and family are endlessly beaten silly. Coming in at a close second is Mr. Bill being decapitated by an ejected VHS tape, followed by the Bill home being demolished by a Sluggo toy plane.

I don't quite think Walter Williams put all his heart into this one, as it falls short of the fun of last year's *Mr. Bill's 20th Anniversary Special*. However, there are two clever commercial parodies, including one for a game called "Monotony." It's good to see Mr. Bill back in action, and with the continued video revolution, Williams has a medium for keeping his creation alive. Let's only hope he ups the effort next time.

How the West Was Fun
(1994)
Warner Home Video
★☆☆☆☆

Those two pug-nosed bitches from *Full House*, Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen, star in a direct-to-video Spaghetti-O Western as two pug-nosed bitches bent on saving a ranch.

Martin Mull, presumably *very* hungry these days, plays comic foil to the bratty twins. He is humiliated not only by starring opposite these two pug-nosed bitches, but by having to fall face-down into cow shit. Other equally clever bits abound, but at no time are Mary Kate, Ashley or Mary Kate *and* Ashley trampled by a stampede, hanged from a tree or shot dead by a sheriff. So it sucks. It also stars that creepy old woman from *Northern Exposure*.

Halloween
(1978)
Blockbuster Video
★★★☆☆
Halloween II
(1981)
MCA/Universal Home Video
★★★☆☆

Have you seen *Halloween* lately? The slasher movie that started it all doesn't hold up all that well. Rightly praised upon release for being something different, John Carpenter's biggest hit has been suffocated over the years, mostly under the crushing weight of its own derivative sequels, particularly last year's dismal *Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers*.

Seeing the man in the Shatner mask butcher people still holds its share of frights, because Carpenter's story is truly creepy. But several elements – especially the opening POV murder – are too amateurish to elicit the intended response. And there is no way in hell that Jamie Lee Curtis would stick around in the house the way she does at the end when she believes she has slain her predator.

In comparison, *Halloween II*, isn't all that much a step down from its predecessor, even without Carpenter directing. Picking up exactly where the first film left off, Michael continues his night of terror, stalking his exasperated sis in a near-empty Haddonfield hospital as she slips in and out of consciousness. The best scene has a runaway police car slamming – and I mean *slamming* – into an unfortunate trick-or-treater.

The unrelated *Halloween III: Season of the Witch* was next, followed by *Halloween 4: The Return of Michael Myers* and *Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers*. The series becomes increasingly shoddy with the influx of Arab names in the credits.

Tales from the Crypt Presents
Bordello of Blood
(1996)
MCA/Universal Home Video
★★★★☆

Though lacking the strong sense of wit that made *Demon Knight* – the first theatrical *Crypt* venture – such an instant cult classic, *Bordello of Blood* is by no means an unworthy follow-up. While it's not as good as its predecessor, it's good on its own.

Wise-ass Dennis Miller plays a nickel-and-dime private dick, but since he gets to fire off smart-aleck line after smart-aleck line, he's basically playing himself. Christian do-gooder virgin Erika Eleniak (that's a stretch) hires Miller to search for her brother, missing since a visit to a local whorehouse. Considering said brother is the vile Corey Feldman, the audience wishes him to remain lost. What Miller uncovers is not your basic chicken ranch with a sultry madam (red-haired model Angie Everhart), but one stocked full with stacked vampires.

From that point on, *Bordello* begins to resemble *From Dusk Till Dawn*, right down to the wayward man of the cloth (a role filled here by Chris Sarandon) and toy pistols full of holy water. So you've seen it before and so the "twist" ending is as predictable as ever, but it's still told with that unique blend of black humor and EC horror, setting it above your average blood-and-guts entry.

Elektra
(1995)
New Horizons Home Video
★★★☆☆

Black Scorpion
(1995)
New Horizons Home Video
★★★★☆

Barb Wire
(1995)
PolyGram Video
★★☆☆☆

The Demolitionist
(1995)
A-Pix Entertainment
★★★☆☆

Looking back, 1995 was a banner year for B-movies starring surgically enhanced TV vets befit in tight, black leather. The sexed-up superheroine genre is sadly underused, so it was quite a treat for this quartet to come along.

Oh, where to begin? I'll try here: In *Elektra*, Shannon Tweed is a quiet woman who favors floral prints and is stepmom to this muscular, blank-faced, long-haired, Jersey-accented, bare-chested bo-hunk whom she lusts after. And what woman wouldn't? The kid's got freakin' super powers! Why, he can jump real far, run real fast and flip vans! The evil, wheelchair-bound Dr. Roach wants the kid's goods; trouble is, it can only be transmitted through his semen and, well, Roach ain't no Liberace-lover.

So when the leather-bound wiles of a pair of back-flippin' bitches fail to extract the juice out of the mighty virgin, Roach kidnaps Ma Shannon, teases her with a vibrator and makes her up to be some ultra-hot harpie that can shoot electric bolts out her hands. Needless to say, she's up 'n' runnin' on her hunky man in no time, tricking him into making a little deposit.

The end credits threaten a sequel before unloading a slew of exclusive *Elektra* bloopers, most of which involve one cast member or another saying the word "fuck" or variations thereof. In addition, Shannon claims she's about to barf, and I can't say I blame her.

Better is *Black Scorpion*, originally part of Showtime's *Roger Corman Presents* series. Joan Severance plays a cop who takes on the vermin of society by dressing like a dominatrix – partly accomplished by donning a ten-cent party mask. She also has electric "stingers," hence her moniker. Specifically, she's after an asthmatic Casey Siemaszko.

Playmate Pamela Anderson Lee fell on her face with *Barb Wire*, a comic-book adaptation that gave her her first (and possibly last) theatrical vehicle. Pam plays a sex-doll-cum-bounty-hunter whose tousled hair and buoyant breasts come in handy more than her guns. Set in a government-overthrown future, Pam does battle with spooky Steve Railsback and a crime boss who is so fat that he is carried around in a bulldozer as he eats chicken legs. A dog that bites guy's balls also figures into this.

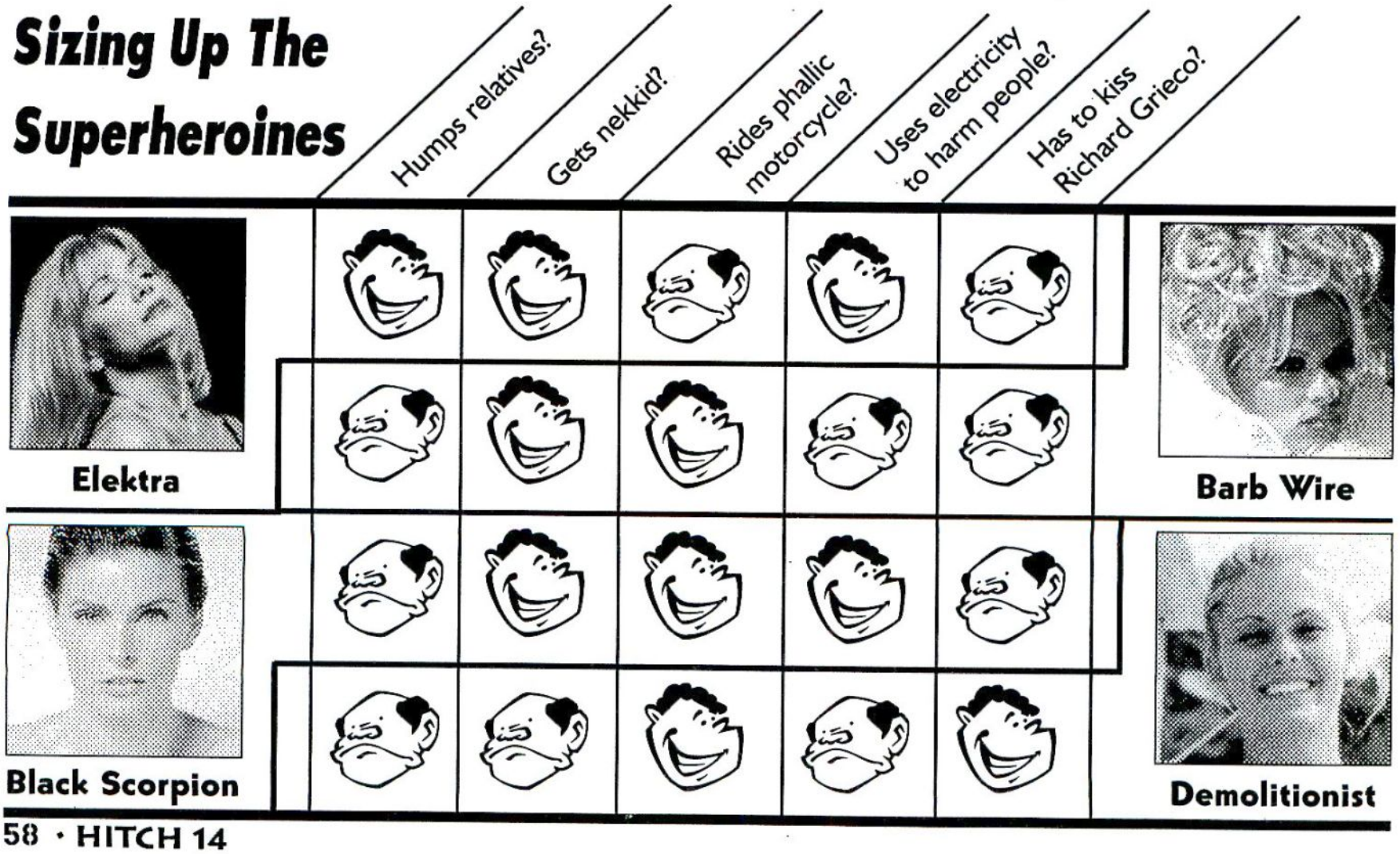
The action scenes at the beginning are good enough, given a tinge of humor. Yet that all gives way to a lot of talking. While it plays better at home than on the big screen, it still doesn't make a helluva lot of sense. Neither does the opening credit sequence, in which Pam swings on a trapeze and rubs her breasts while guys splash her with water, but I'm not complaining there.

Lastly, Pam's former *Baywatch* co-star Nicole Eggert is kickin' butt as *The Demolitionist*. Just fast-forward through the first 45 minutes of FX maestro Robert Kurtzman's directorial debut. All you'll miss is greasy-ass Richard Grieco sticking a lit cigarette in Nicole's eye and ripping an earring out of her lobe. The film comes alive when Nicole dies, and she's re-animated by *Re-Animator*'s Bruce Abbott, who turns her into this bulletproof Valley gal with a bitchin' motorcycle. She's got this cool outfit that looks like a cross between M.A.N.T.I.S. and Michael Jackson with his surgical mask on. She gets revenge on Ricky by turning him into the Incredible Melting Man. Trust me: You'll be clappin'.

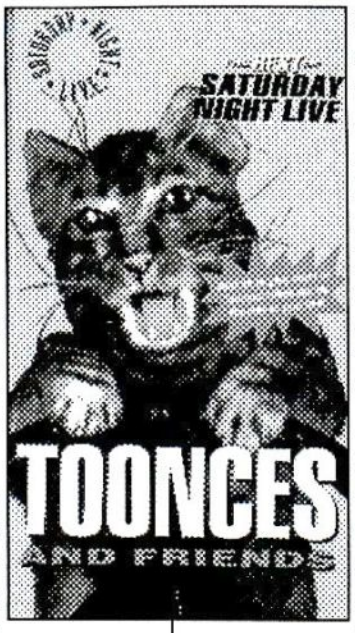
The Best of Saturday Night Live: Toonces and Friends
(1993)
Starmaker Entertainment
★★★★★

At a brief 24 minutes with almost as many

Sizing Up The Superheroines



laughs, I'd say this sick-minded sketch collection is dead-on. Actually broadcast as a prime-time special by NBC some years back, this one-shot *Saturday Night Live* spinoff places Toonces, the Cat Who Could Drive a Car (but just not very well) as a sitcom hero. Luckily, the one-note Toonces gag is not the bulk of the show. Instead, he bridges other mind-less, cruel, slapstick sketches from creator Jack Handey.



As Coach Dobbs, Randy Quaid is continually beamed with baseballs until he is put in traction. Scruffy the Rat is a pet sewer scoundrel that can play the piano and price cans of vegetables. In "Abe Lincoln's Time Machine," Honest Abe (*SCTV* alum Joe Flaherty) attempts to kill John Wilkes Booth (*Kids in the Hall*'s Dave Foley) through the years, all to no avail. George Wendt and Kevin McDonald are Earth-visiting aliens who mean nothing but peace, but keep smashing children with the door to their ship. Best of all are Griffin Dunne and Karen Allen, on the run as "Fugitive Couple," in which a highway patrol-man is eaten alive by ants.

Interspersed are various exploits of Toonces, in which he drives Steve Martin off a cliff, pulls the tail of a live lizard, drives Dana Carvey off a cliff, plays ping pong with pal Spunky, commandeers a riding lawnmow-er and flies a plane. In the final segment, Phil Hartman plays Arnold Schwarzenegger to Toonces' cyborg Tooncinator.

Superman: The Last Son of Krypton
(1996)
Warner Home Video
★★★★☆
Phantom 2040: The Movie
(1996)
Family Home Entertainment
★☆☆☆☆

Serving as the pilot to the currently run-ning cartoon series on the WB network, *Superman: The Last Son of Krypton* traces the Man of Steel's life from baby to...well, superman, all drawn in the same crisp, clear and colorful art deco style as the exceptional *Batman* series from the early '90s.

Wimp Tim Daly provides the voice of both Superman and alter ego Clark Kent, while Dana Delany turns in a sexy Lois Lane. Superman is just beginning to astound the city of Metropolis when Lex Luthor arrives with an arsenal of robot warriors. Propelled by a real story, live-ly animation and a spirited score (all of which were attrib-utes of the theatrical release *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm*), this *Superman* is likely to stay afloat for some time.

In the best line – a near throw-away – Ma Kent tells her son she doesn't want him to be like "that nut from Gotham City." Too late, Ma.

At the spectrum's opposite end is the *Phantom 2040* pilot, which, unlike *Superman*, exhibits animation done with-out time or care. Jumpy and Japanese-looking, it really makes this 90-minute feature a trial to watch. Worse is the plot, which stretch-es the true Phantom mythology by casting a video-game-obsessed teen as the crimson hero. Aside from a nifty opening, I wouldn't even bother.

Reddick Laproscopic Cholecystecomy
(1990)
Reddick Laboratories
★★★★☆

Hey, kids, it's surgery time! With this innovative, step-by-step video, you can per-form cholecystecomies right in your very own living room...just like those guys on *ER*!

Now I'm not quite sure just what a chole-cystecomy is, but apparently it involves:

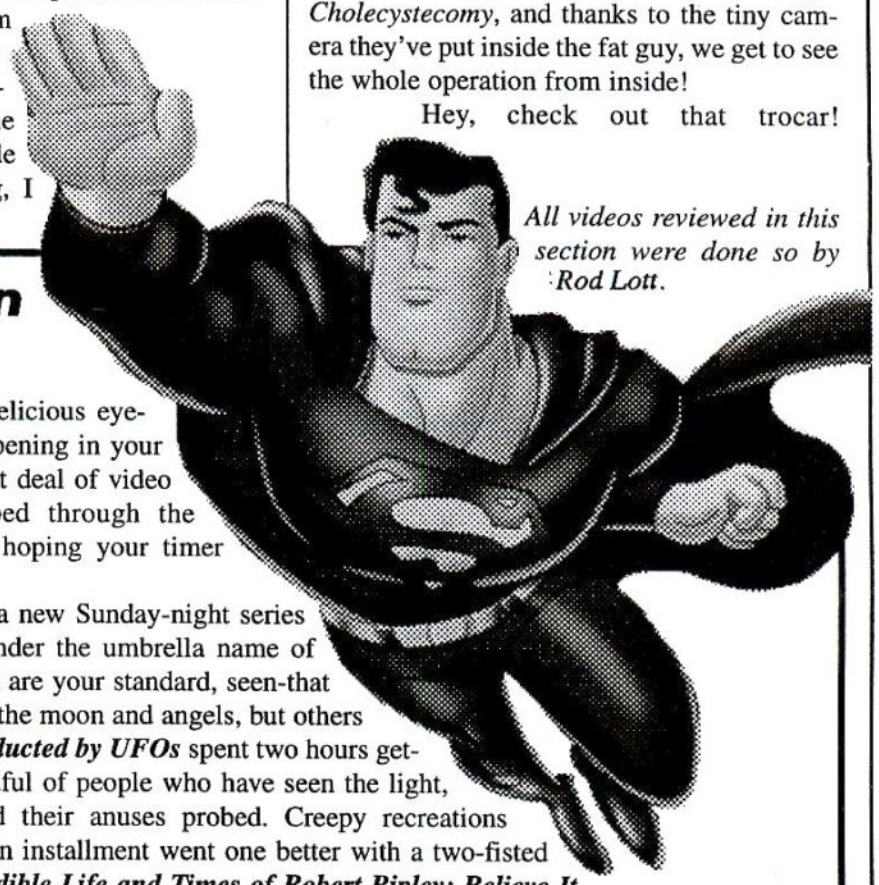
1) Stripping down a large fat guy and putting him to sleep;

2) Squeezing a lump of tummy and shov-ing a steel stick through his upper abdomen;

3) And tearing away at this bloody, orangeish tissue surrounding his gall bladder with tiny forceps.

All of this is shown to us in vivid detail and vibrant colors on *Reddick Laproscopic Cholecystecomy*, and thanks to the tiny cam-era they've put inside the fat guy, we get to see the whole operation from inside!

Hey, check out that trocar!



All videos reviewed in this section were done so by Rod Lott.

It's All on Cable!

Not all of the delicious eye-candy action is happening in your VCR. Lately, a great deal of video goodness has seeped through the cable lines. Here's hoping your timer was set.

TBS has begun a new Sunday-night series of documentaries under the umbrella name of *Topx*. Many of them are your standard, seen-that yawners about trips the moon and angels, but others are really weird. ***Abducted by UFOs*** spent two hours get-ting to know a handful of people who have seen the light, been there and had their anuses probed. Creepy recreations ensued. A Halloween installment went one better with a two-fisted punch of ***The Incredible Life and Times of Robert Ripley: Believe It or Not!*** and ***Haunted***, with the former a fun look at the cartoonist's never-ending quest for people who could smoke cigarettes with their eyes, and the latter an examination of ghosts lurking around Civil War sites, creepy attics and a bad children's theater.

Similarly, A&E offered a two-hour tour of ***Haunted Houses***.

Someone over at the FOX network deserves a raise for scheduling a string of one-hour trashy documentaries. The trend started with *Alien Autopsy: Fact or Fiction?* When that little wonder proved a ratings bonanza, the ever-fledging fourth network followed with the increasingly exploitative ***Why Planes Go Down***, hosted by *X-Files*' Gillian Anderson; ***When Animals Attack***, for which Robert Urich introduced footage of nature gone wild, most notably an old geezer flailing about a swarm of killer bees; and ***When Disasters Strike***, nothing more than back-to-back, caught-on-camera scenes of people falling, planes crashing and cars smashing. Check out those formula-ic titles! FOX won't cancel *Married...with Children*, but they're doing something right to make up for it. Incredibly, a cancer-ridden Urich returned for ***When Animals Attack II***, complete with angry alligators, bulls, deer and sharks! Keep it up!

The other networks are beginning to take note. Timed to coincide with the video release of *Twister*, CBS broadcast ***Forces of Nature***, a full 60 minutes of dumb people hanging around tornadoes, hurricanes and floods a lot longer than they should have.

FLICKS

The new comedy *Swingers* looks, sounds and feels like it was made with the change from soneone's pocket. That works to its advantage.

For if this were a slick, feel-good comedy with name stars and a bubble-gum soundtrack, the whole exercise would ring false. Instead, you feel real gains have been made here, no doubt due in part – albeit a *large* part – to its star, writer and co-producer, the slack-jawed Jon Favreau.

Favreau has written himself a fine lead part – no doubt an accurate representation of his true self – as a whiny (but never overbearing) sad sack of a struggling actor who'd like to start climbing the Hollywood ladder, if only he could forget about the longtime girlfriend back home who dumped him.

His best pal (both onscreen and in real life), a magnificent Vince Vaughn, decides the best tonic to cure his friend's ailing heart is a night on the town – women, wine and song. But whether it's a road trip to Vegas or a dip in the dives within L.A.'s bowels, Jon can't stop thinking about loves lost. Only their mini-marathons of video ice hockey seem to warm him up any.

Armed with a heavy-hitting sountrack of cocktail-hour dreams (see "Disc Dish," page 47), *Swingers* does a terrific job of capturing the lovelorn bachelor scene. The direction by Doug Liman propels the story along just fine, but it's really second-fiddle to Favreau's hilarous, off-the-cuff script. It's like *Clerks*, but in color and minus the snowball reference.

The characters are well-defined, most likely because they are patterned after Favreau's real friends. Unlike most films, the characters here grow and develop. Jon, for instance, progresses from his rung of patheticness to one of hope.

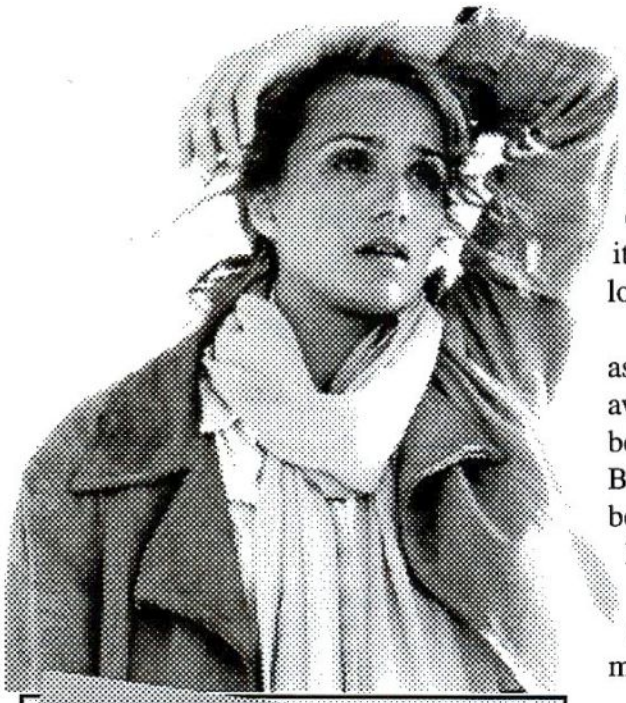
Nice guys do finish first, both onscreen and off.

The Mirror Has Two Faces

Recording artist/movie star/diva/bitch Barbra Streisand returns to the screen after the abominable *The Prince of Tides* for a film that looks so repellent, I'm staying far away.

It looks like another of Babs' ill-fated and heavy-handed attempts at winning a directing Oscar. I think the Academy has better sense. Now if we can only work on Barbra's ego.

THE ENGLISH PATIENT



Some of *The English Patient* is breathtaking. Some of it is intense. And some of it is dry as the desert in which much of it takes place. But while it may be overlong, it never wears out its welcome.

Schindler's List's Ralph Fiennes stars as a badly disfigured Englishman who has awaken in a wartorn hospital, where he is being nursed back to health by Juliette Binoche. As the two find themselves alone, both waiting for Fiennes to die, he tells her his story.

This story, which continually weaves in and out with the current narrative, never moves in a linear fashion. It involves a far-reaching web of infidelity, betrayal and political intrigue, many facets of which unfold in delicate, due time.

Fiennes is excellent, unrecognizable yet never distracting as the scarred hero. As the object of his affection, Kristin Scott-Thomas steals the show. She's as good an actress as she is ravishing.

Binoche does well, too, as does pock-faced Willem Dafoe in a mysterious supporting role as a thumbless stranger.

Director Anthony Minghella has crafted a superior period piece whose charms far outweigh any disadvantages posed by its near-three-hour running time.

Swingers RULES

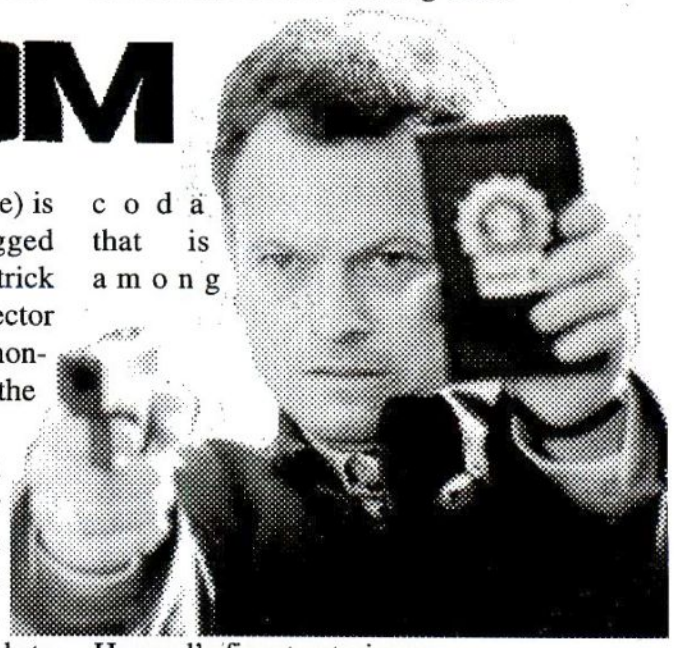
RULE #2: TIMING IS EVERYTHING – There's nothing like a good entrance. You wouldn't want to sit at a table that wasn't set. If you're there too early, you look desperate. Show up late like you're "just stopping by," and you come off like the man about town.

RULE #4: GRACE UNDER PRESSURE – A good (answering machine) message can put you on the fast track to paradise. The stakes are high. This is no joke. The golden rule is keep it simple. Don't try to overexplain who you are or how you're feeling. It's a moment frozen in amber. It's a small piece of your soul. Give her a taste – the little pink spoon, not the whole sundae.

—*From the* Swingers' Rules of Dating, *published by Miramax Books*

RANSOM

Ron Howard's *Ransom* (Touchstone) is your typical forced, gerry-rigged Hollywood thriller throwing in every trick in the book. But under a talented director like Opie and an above-average, no-nonsense screenwriter like Richard Price, the damn thing has it share of highs.



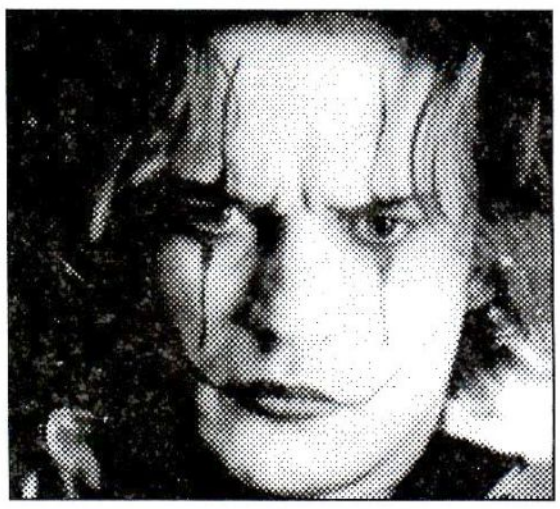
Mel Gibson, less likable than usual, plays a egotistical airline owner whose young son is kidnapped by a quartet of strung-out thugs. Conflict arises when the ultra-rich but thick-skulled Gibson won't pony up the cash to meet their demands. In fact, he offers the ransom as a bounty on their heads.

That plot point, along with one not shown in the previews, gives *Ransom* its punch. It all trickles down to a nicely done, quiet shootout, followed by an intense coda that is among Howard's finest set pieces.

Gibson is naturally upstaged by the better actors in the cast, notably cop Gary Sinise and FBI agent Delroy Lindo. Teary wife Rene Russo is handed a thankless role, but plays it foxy like only Rene Russo can. She's worth a million, easy.

You Couldn't Have Paid Me to See Them...

The Associate



The Crow: City of Angels

D3: The Mighty Ducks

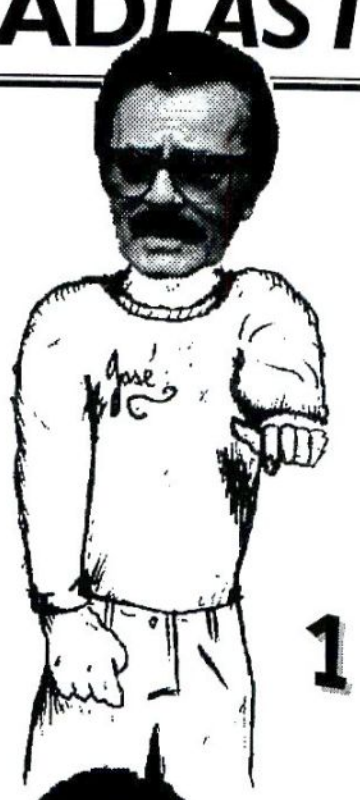
DEADLAST

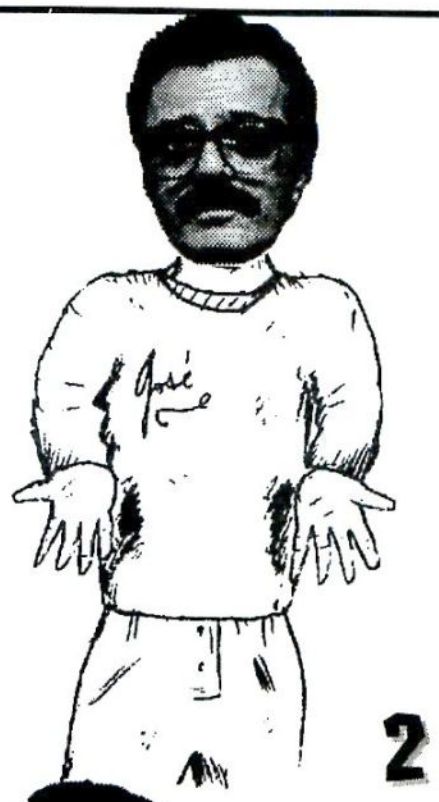
Robert Goulet

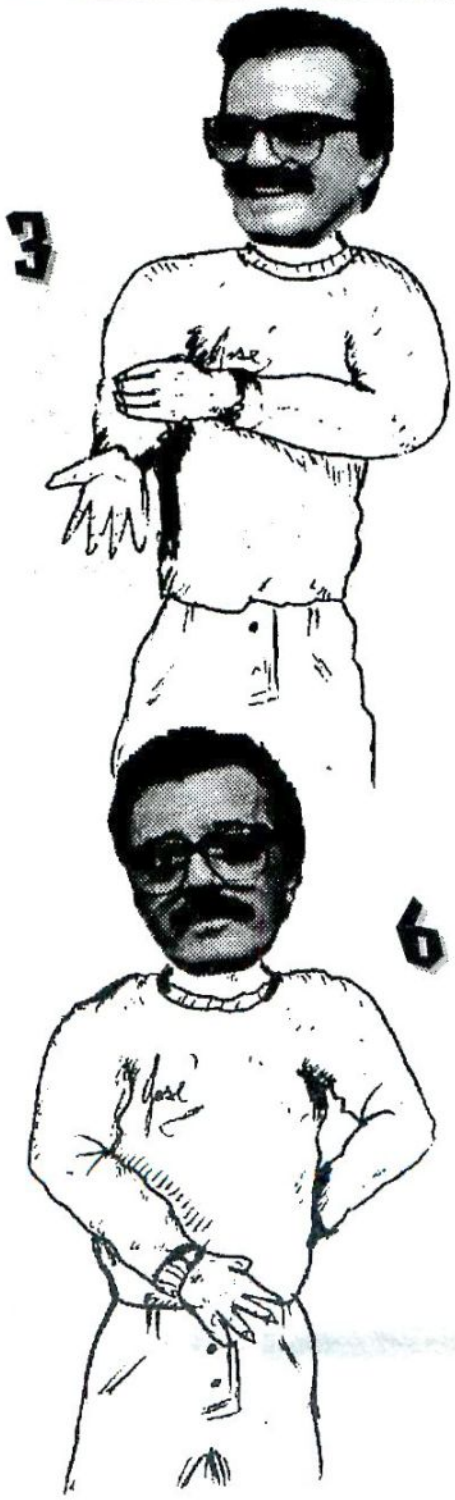
DEMONSTRATES THE

Macarena

Art by Brad Lott
Concept by Rod Lott







1 ► Palms out and down, baby.

◄ 2 Palms out and up.

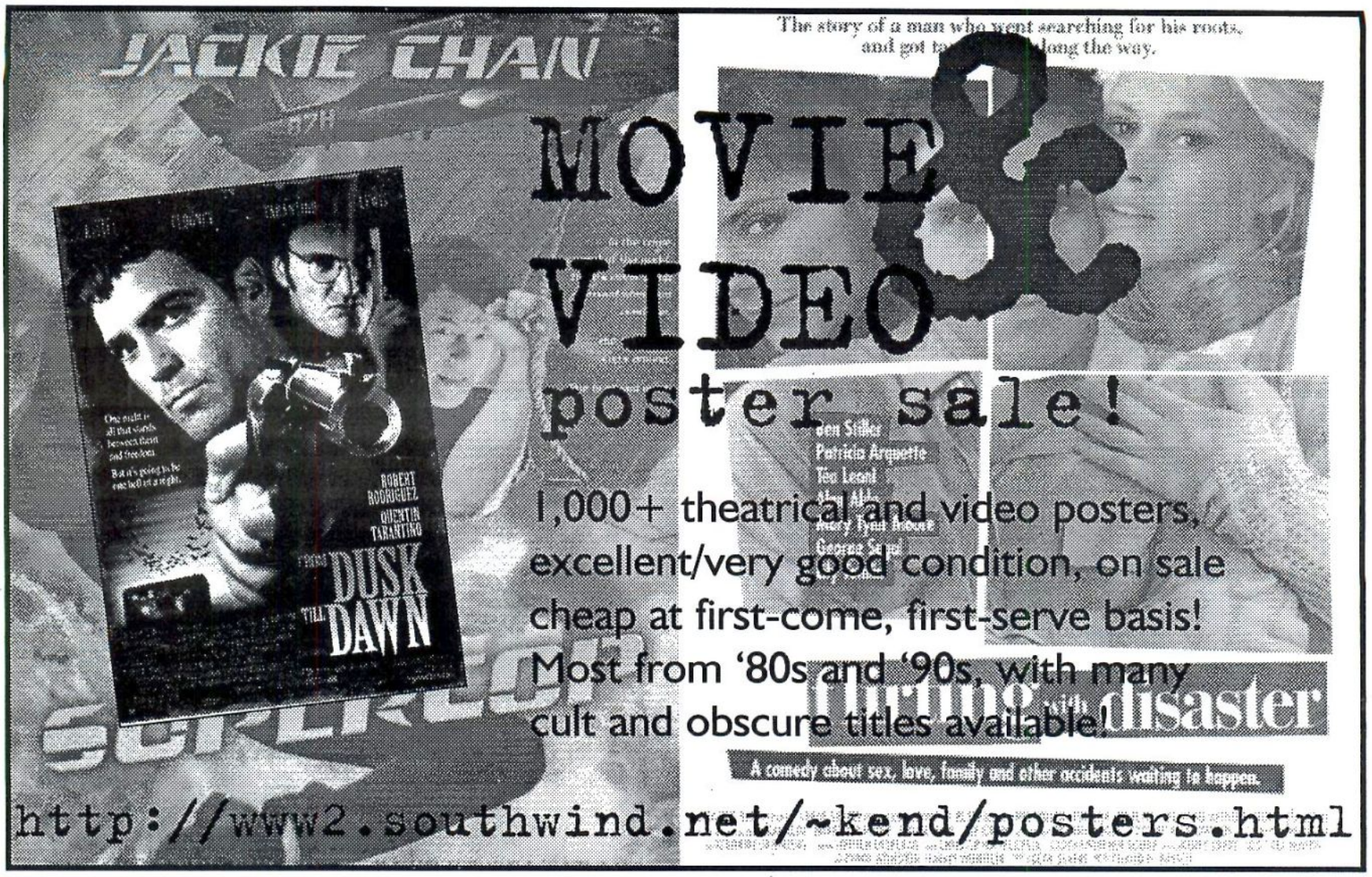
3 ► Hands on arms, dig?

◄ 4 Hands on head.

5 ► Hands on hips, ooh yeah...

◄ 6 Hands on buttocks, firm as steel

7 ► Sway back and forth, like a knight in Camelot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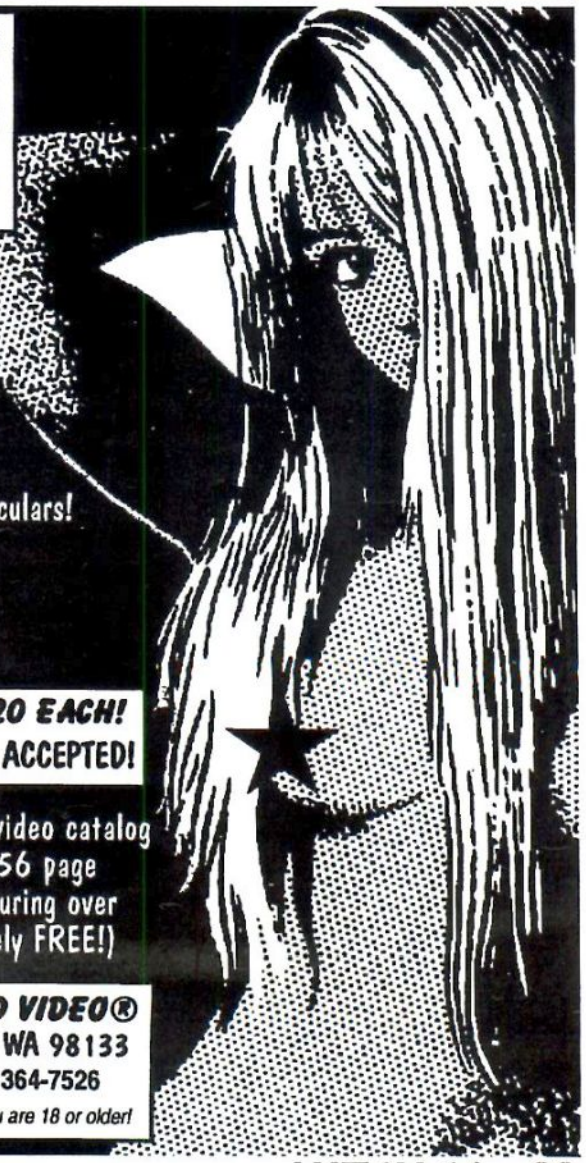

Nudie Cuties!
Sexploitation!
Roadshow Rarities!
Exploitation Classics!
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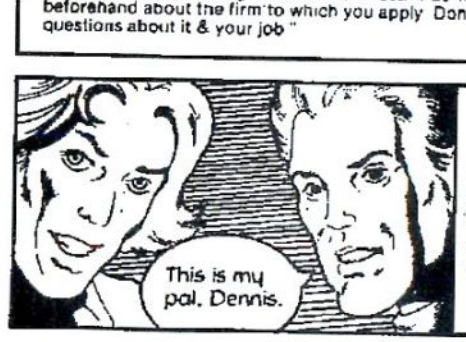
How to **Sell Yourself** to an employer.

"Study your qualifications & abilities so that you can present them briefly & clearly during the interview. Learn as much as you can beforehand about the firm to which you apply. Don't be afraid to ask questions about it & your job."



"Avoid taking anyone with you to apply for a job. The employer wants to talk to you."

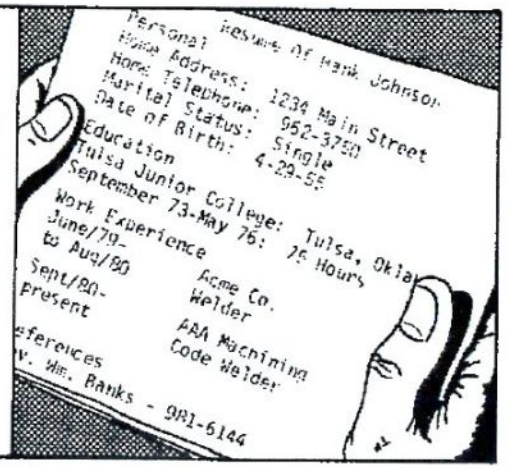
"Make a presentable appearance. Be clean, neat, & dress as well as you can afford. Don't overdress or wear gaudy clothes. Women should avoid too much makeup. Watch your posture. Create a good impression by assuming a graceful position in the chair. Don't yawn or slouch or display signs of nervousness."

"Answer all the employer's questions accurately, honestly, frankly and promptly. Never say anything on which you would be unable to make good."

"Be polite and courteous, and show due respect for the person interviewing you. Don't become familiar or try to win favor by addressing him as 'Jack' or 'Buddy'."
What's this, Bud?

"Speak with confidence and enthusiasm, but do not bluff or exaggerate. Use good English, speak distinctly, and don't talk too much."

"Your resume should give a continuous record of all your jobs, dates of employment, wages received, the exact nature of your work, and the reason you left. It should also include as references the names of at least three responsible people who know you well. This information is important to the employer."

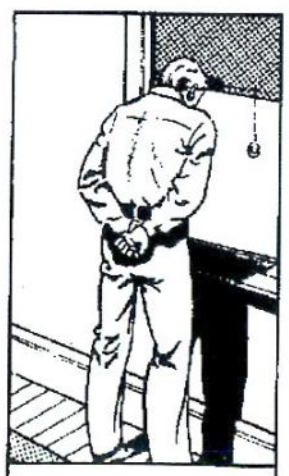


"Point out any special training you have had that would be helpful on the job."

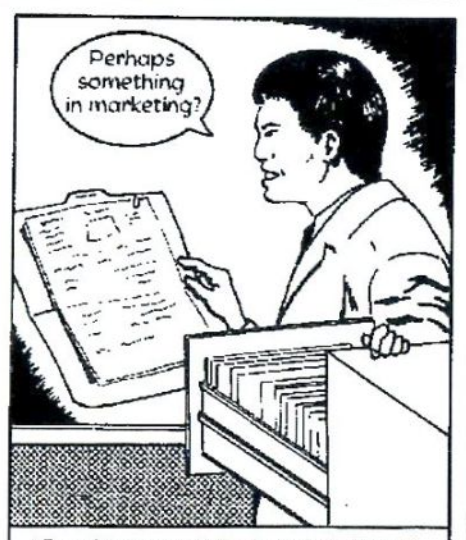
"Feel sure that you are really interested in the type of work you are applying for."

"Be prompt. Keep your appointments to the minute."

"Never start an argument with your prospective employer & avoid criticizing past employers or associates."



"Do not become discouraged if, during your first interview, you become nervous and fail to present yourself favorably. Seek interviews and improve your presentation each time."



"Even if the prospect of an immediate job is not possible, the interviewers advice regarding future openings should be considered. Such suggestions sometimes lead to a job."

"And finally, avoid mention of your personal, domestic, or financial troubles. The employer is interested only in what you can do and how well you can do it. In other words of what value you can be to him. And remember, if the OKLAHOMA JOB SERVICE refers you to a job it means that you are definitely "in the running." From then on the interview is a friendly business affair between you and the employer. You and he have a great deal in common. make the most of it and the best of luck!"